

Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star

Un rapport «urgent» de l'Organisation arabe des droits de l'Homme dénonce une situation qui se dégrade en Jordanie.

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Clinton caps comeback with convincing re-election

Combined Agencies—President Clinton won a convincing re-election victory Tuesday, capping a singular political comeback that promised him a place in history as he becomes the first Democrat to be returned to the White House in successive terms since Franklin Roosevelt won a fourth term more than 50 years ago.

Clinton's triumph marked a stunning reversal of fortune for

a president who less than two years ago was widely reviled and was forced to assert his relevance in the face of the Republican takeover of Congress.

With 66 percent of the American popular vote counted, Clinton was leading Republican challenger Bob Dole by 49 percent to 41 percent. As the vote rolled in, he teetered all night on the edge

of his goal of winning the outright majority of the vote that he was denied in his first election, four years ago. Reform Party candidate Ross Perot trailed at eight percent.

But while voters returned Clinton to the White House, they denied the Democratic Party control of the Senate and apparently left Republicans in power in the House, ensuring at least two more years of divided

government.

But the GOP margin was shaved as the 105th Congress will have 220 Republicans, 198 Democrats and two Independents.

Clinton may enjoy something of a legislative honeymoon with a chastened but intact congressional GOP, even as he hunkers down for the blows that may be coming from White House special counsel Kenneth W. Starr and from Capitol Hill investigators probing everything from the FBI files to the financing of the Democratic campaign.

For the longer haul, the Republicans still have to convince voters that they have a social conscience and Democrats must prove that they have the fiscal discipline that the voters clearly want.

The exit polls confirmed what reporters have been hearing at the doorsteps all year: Americans were voting for

Clinton with fingers crossed and reducing the risks by giving Republicans a power base in Congress.

Clinton claimed the mantle of victory at 11:06 pm US time.

"Today the American people have spoken," the President Clinton said, as first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, daughter Chelsea and Vice President Al Gore and his family looked on. "They have affirmed our course; they have told us to go forward."

Clinton, who ran and won in the middle of the political spectrum, said, "Tonight I proclaim that the vital American center is alive and well. It is the common ground on which we have made our progress."

He paid tribute to Dole and asked the sprawling crowd to applaud his 35 years of service to his country. "On behalf of



● The Israeli President Ezer Weizman arrived in Amman yesterday, Wednesday, accompanied by his wife as his first official visit to Jordan. Weizman held talks with His Majesty King Hussein and other senior officials focusing on bilateral ties and ways to push the peace process forward. Weizman was received by Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath, the Prime Minister and other senior officials.

During a joint press conference with the Israeli president, King Hussein said that Jordan is determined to pursue all efforts in order to achieve a comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East. He commended Mr Weizman's vision towards creating a better future for the coming generation. "We will work together closely to help bring about further progress to consolidate the foundations already created for a better future for our people."

For his part, the Israeli president said that the ground has been laid for the future of the middle East. He added that despite the ups and downs in the relationship between the Palestinians and Israelis there will be a solution especially to Hebron. "We in Israel know now that we have to deal with Arafat; the Arab world has to deal with Mr Netanyahu," Weizman said.

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President Bill Clinton waves to supporters as his wife Hillary and daughter Chelsy look on 5 November, after winning re-election for a second term. UPI

US foreign policy maintains steady course with Clinton's victory

By Marwan Asmar

Star Staff Writer

"ALL QUIET on the Western front" is the most likely expression to describe the re-election victory of Bill Clinton as the next president of the United States. At least on the external side, it is argued that the US foreign policy, at least as far as the Middle East is concerned, is already "tailor made."

The United States will continue to pursue the peace process and support the sanctions against Iraq, Iran and Libya.

Mr Clinton will now be in a position to move more strongly on the Middle East negotiations, says Mr Mahmoud El Sherif, a former Minister of Information. "I believe that Mr Clinton will be able to move more freely on the issue of the peace process."

Similarly, Dr Kamel Abu Jaber believes much the same thing. A former Minister of Foreign Affairs, who led the Jordanian delegation to the Madrid peace conference in 1991, Abu Jaber believes now "Things will be going on as before to the peace process

with no time wasting which there would have been if Bob Dole was elected."

Again Ibrahim Izziden, a former Information Minister holds the same belief. He said that this is a new period and a new opportunity for the peace process.

However as soon as one problem seemed to be solved another one arises. The re-election of Clinton does not necessarily mean that he will put greater influence on Israel. While it is significant that his second term makes him free from the constraints of US domestic policy and the Zionist lobby, President Clinton will still have to overcome major obstacles.

Lower House woman Deputy Tojan Faisal says "that this is misleading because the Zionist lobby has a major role in US politics."

way the administration used to handle things from one or two years ago."

And this is the sticking point. "I think there would be a political will to push the process, but this does not mean that the US administration will try to push Israel in a hard way. What they would try to do is to convince Israel."

This is a major problem, if the US does not push Israel hard enough, then the peace process would at best falter. It is generally agreed as Dr Abu Jaber says that peace is irreversible at this stage. But he says "what kind of peace are we talking about?" that is the question.

The US "will continue to be committed to the peace process. Netanyahu is committed to the peace process, but this means nothing," if there is no substance on the ground says

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High hopes with moderate expectations await Cairo summit

By Pam Dougherty

Special to The Star

IN EARLY November 1995 life in Amman was totally focused on the economic summit that was meant to put Jordan on the international investment map. Twelve months later as the Cairo economic conference looms, expectations are more moderate.

"We are not promising anyone it is going to be something big," says Reem Badran, assistant general manager of the Investment Promotion Corp. (IPC) which is co-ordinating Jordanian participation. "But we are working hard to make our national projects appeal to private investors."

Many of the 25 national projects, which have an estimated cost of \$3.7 billion, being presented in Cairo were also on the table in Amman but those have been important changes. Badran says most of the projects have now been studied more thoroughly. "Government ministries were asked for good pre-feasibility studies for their projects," she says, "so potential investors will know what is in store."

Another crucial change is that, unlike the 1995 Amman summit, where projects were classified as private, government and mixed ventures, the government is now looking at them entirely as vehicles for private investment.

Overall the project list, which includes the industry, telecommunications, energy, water, transport and tourism

sectors (see details in chart) seems well designed to attract investor interest. Most of the sectors included are not directly affected by the regional political climate. Even the sensitive sector of tourism has shown remarkable growth in the past two years.

The industrial projects are concentrated on minerals exploitation, a sector in which Jordan already has solid experience and a good track record in attracting private investment while interest in new telecommunications projects is also high.

With Jordan's limited natural energy sources this sector might seem hard to "sell" to international investors. But the government's expression of interest for a private oil refinery brought offers from 17 companies early in 1996, although the government now seems to be turning its attention to the expansion of Jordan's existing refinery in Zeraqa. The US' Enron Corporation has also recently reconfirmed its interest in establishing a liquid gas plant in Aqaba.

Tourism could be seen as the most vulnerable sector but it has seen extraordinary growth since the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel in 1994. As a result, leading international names, including Movenpick, Marriott, Hyatt, Four Seasons and Accor are already involved in new projects in Amman and the Dead Sea. The Aqaba Regional Authority has also issued

licenses for four new hotels in Aqaba, including one for Jordan's first 100 per cent Israeli-owned investment, and other hotels, together with a world class golf course are also under consideration.

The least obviously attractive sectors to a private investor are water and public transport, where a strong social component can make attractive pricing a challenge. Jordan also lacks specific legislation to cover the Build Operate Own (BOO) and Build Operate Transfer (BOT) approach which the government would like to see for projects such as the Disi-Amman water conveyance.

Government representatives in Cairo will be able to point to real progress in Jordan's reform programme since the last

Amman conference. A new promotion of investment law is in place while a major reduction in customs formalities, a forerunner to a new custom's law, was introduced in November. Other new economic legislations including securities, intellectual property, monopolies and companies' laws will go to parliament before the end of 1996.

There have also been concrete moves on the privatization front. The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) and the Jordan Electricity Authority have both been commercialized, the government has already announced its intent to sell a 26 percent stake in the TCC, and new telecommunications services are open to the private sector. The Jordan Investment Corporation (JIC) is

also selling shares in a number of public companies, including a substantial stake in the Jordan Cement Factories Company (JCFC) while the Ministry of Transport is looking for consultants to help with the privatization of the Aqaba Railways Corporation.

Jordan will also be participating in the presentation of a range of regional projects in Cairo. The Jordan Rift Valley is back on the agenda as a joint Jordanian-Israeli venture with 12-13 projects, with the two sides each presenting two projects in detail. So far it is known that Israel will present a joint telecommunications project while Jordan has been elected to offer the Aqaba/Peace airport and a logistics centre for land transport.

Jordan will also be involved in the EU-sponsored Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDWG) schemes which link it with Israel, the Palestinians and Egypt.

Any regional project will

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Yeltsin's daughter develops liking for intrigue

By Susan Sachs

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

MOSCOW—Hers was a typical Russian woman's story. Trained as a mathematician, she had a job calculating rocket trajectories but quit when her second son was born. If she wanted to talk politics instead of babies, father would remind her to mind her own business.

Tatyana Dyachenko, younger daughter of President Boris N. Yeltsin, has come a long, long way.

Suddenly, at the age of 36, she has become, arguably, the second-most influential person in Russia, subordinate only to her ailing father.

Officially, she is simply one member of the analytical center run by Anatoli Chubais, her friend and Yeltsin's new chief of staff. Unofficially, she is said to be gatekeeper to the sequestered president—the

principal channel through which requests, proposals, gossip, rumors and petitions reach Yeltsin.

Her position, added to her alliance with the widely detested Chubais, has made her a lightning rod for criticism from Yeltsin's political enemies.

"Perhaps she has brains, but she is only a daughter and not an experienced politician," ex-chief of staff Nikolai Yegorov, one of the losers in the Kremlin power struggle for Yeltsin's ear, groused last week to a Russian newspaper. "She has absolutely no

experience in this area and can be easily manipulated."

Others on the outs with Yeltsin go further still.

Fired national security adviser Alexander Lebed blamed Chubais for plotting his dismissal. But he said Chubais used Dyachenko to persuade Yeltsin and bring the plot to fruition.

"There isn't a woman alive who can't be swayed," said Lebed, in reference to Yeltsin's daughter.

Former presidential bodyguard and ex-KGB Gen. Alexander Kozhakov, who for years controlled access to Yeltsin and vetted all his mail, also said Dyachenko allows herself to be used by Chubais in a sinister but implausible plot to mislead Yeltsin and take over Russia.

"She brings him (Yeltsin) the papers and the papers are all prepared in Chubais' headquarters," the embittered Kozhakov charged in an interview with The Guardian newspaper last week.

It was quite a change from the Kozhakov of six months ago, who was firmly entrenched as Yeltsin's confidant and saw Dyachenko as little more than a temporary Kremlin novelty.

"It's good that Tatyana takes an active part in the election campaign," he said in April. "It's important to have a person who can openly tell the president anything, even something that is sure to displease him... And besides,

appointments and work for "special" tests, and the Kremlin last Wednesday said, his medical team would announce a date for the operation early next week.

In the absence of Yeltsin's strong hand and his knack for playing various courtiers against each other, the hyperactive Chubais, 41, has been able to convert his job as head of the presidential administration into a highly visible position that gives him a hand in all the critical committees and circles of power.

But Chubais is controversial, and much of the controversy is rubbing off on Dyachenko. Admired by some as a top-notch manager and advocate of free-market reforms, Chubais is also widely blamed for Russia's flawed privatization program, which failed to deliver on its promises of prosperity for ordinary Russians.

Fired earlier in the year by Yeltsin, he was welcomed back to the fold to revive the

Even that meager contact with the outside world is about to end. Yeltsin has canceled all

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Children show staggering Journalistic sense

By Manal Omar
Special to The Star

THE REPRESENTATIVE from the Jordan News Agency (Petr) stared blankly back at the 15-year-old boy. Then, with a smile spreading across his face, he answered matter-of-factly: "I do not know the answer to your question."

It was not the first time that a participant from the three-day seminar titled *Young Journalists* had left one of the speakers speechless. The 30 students chosen from Amman, Zarqa, Madaba, and Salt left a strong impression with whoever they came across.

The seminar, sponsored by the Builders of the Future Forum (BFF) and UNICEF, began last Thursday 31 October. It was not mere lectures with students taking notes. Rather, the seminar involved intense participation from each student. In many cases, the students assumed the role of lecturer as they eloquently voiced their views and opinions. The intelligence of the students and the strength in character was clearly symbolized in each question they asked and the rich debate which inevitably ensued.

In the opening ceremony held at the Hava Cultural Center in Shmeisani, a number of youth groups performed outstanding presentations, ranging from *dabka* to poetry recitals. In a speech Ayat Qadumi, a youth representative of BFF, called on the Minister of Information Marwan Muasher, the mass media, teachers, and the youth themselves to

protect children's rights.

"It is easy for one of the ministers to attend such opening ceremonies, but the moment it is over they leave behind all that they have heard," said Yousef, a 17-year-old participant and a member of BFF. "Whenever I talk about children's rights people look at me and say 'with all your height you're still a kid.'" BFF emphasizes that under international definitions, a child is anyone under 18 years of age.

The three-day seminar was included a number of activities that were beneficial to young students who wanted to pursue a journalism career. UNICEF and BFF filled the agenda with highly qualified speakers and a number of field trips, where the students could witness behind-the-scenes activities in journalism. Yet throughout the most outstanding part of the workshop was the youths themselves. It was clear that the initiative to learn was from within, and as they entered debates with adults it was easy to forget that many were as young as 14 years old.

"I don't understand why there is not more programs on TV for youths," a girl from Zarqa asked Dr Mohammed Al Shrayda from Yarmouk University. "Why do they think they can put programs on TV about Michael Jackson and say it is for youth. We have real issues and problems we like to discuss." Dr Shrayda agreed with the girl, and a debate about the role of journalism in protecting children's rights followed. Dr Shrayda suggested the children voice their opinions to JTV directly.

Two days later when Suhad Intemeh from JTV and Faryal Samhori from the radio came, the youths indeed raised their objections. "I would like to know how something like the Bold and the Beautiful, which has nothing to do with our culture lasted on TV for so long. Don't you think we could have used the half hour for something more productive?" asked Samer also from Zarqa. He was not the only one to voice his opinion, the questions poured in until the last minute of the allotted time.

The primary objective of the seminar was to help sharpen the students' skills. In reality, the seminar served as an outlet for their voices to be heard. As speakers came to deliver lectures they found themselves talking to people who were well informed. The students took advantage of the field trips to Petra, JTV and radio, and Al Arwaq newspaper. While visiting the radio station, they were interviewed by the English and Arabic programs. During their visit to Al Arwaq, they proposed to Fardous Al Masri, director of public relations, to increase their page from one to an entire supplement.

"This is the goal of BFF. We want our activities to serve as a springboard for youth to grow," explains Fares Jaber, the youth organizer of the seminar. BFF has been active with youth activities for the past two years. Currently, the membership has reached a total of 60. In addition, the organization has expanded from Amman to branches in Zarqa and Salt.

The activities that are held are produced



and implemented by the youth themselves. "The students approached me as a result of the BFF show. They felt that half an hour was not enough," explained Issam Zawawi, president of BFF. The determination of the members of BFF has led each member into developing a sense of responsibility that one could argue the adults in our community lack.

This seminar is the third one organized by the teenagers. In addition to the weekly television program, they also have a full page in Al Arwaq newspaper every Monday, which is written and produced by the youth themselves. "We look at this as a training course for a regular supplement or magazine of our own," states Jaber.

As the end of the seminar approached, participants wished there was more time. "I feel like we have just scratched the surface. There is so much more I would like to know," explains Taghreed from Amman. Neither three days or three weeks could quench the insatiable thirst for knowledge of these youths. The strength and skills of each one was apparent throughout the three days, making the seminar a huge success.

Well deserved certificates of recognition were handed out by UNICEF and BFF. As everyone bid farewell, the adults who participated during the three days let out a sigh of relief. If the youth are a reflection of the future to come, Jordan's future looks very bright. ■

Yeltsin's daughter develops liking

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president" flagging re-election campaign. He helped engineer the firing of Kozhakov in June and the firing of political rival Lebed this month.

His alliance with Dyachenko has been evident since the campaign, when she broke with Russian tradition and took an open and active image-making role for her father. She quickly became associated with the Chubais axis of presidential aides, which includes the director of the independent television station NTV and the part owner of the quasi-government station ORT.

In the ensuing battle between Kozhakov and Chubais for influence in Yeltsin's camp, Dyachenko sided with Chubais against Yeltsin's longtime drinking buddy.

Attacks on her by Kozhakov's friends since then show just how shocking it must have been for the ousted bodyguard.

"Under the pressure of her new friends, Tatyana changed her attitude toward Kozhakov," Valeri Sreletsky, a Kozhakov intimate who also served in the presidential guard, recalled recently in a newspaper interview.

"Kozhakov warned Tatyana about these people trying to get close to the presidential family through her," he added. "He even showed her materials on her friends."

In an interview conducted just before Kozhakov was fired, Dyachenko said she faulted her father for just one thing.

"I'm surprised how he can tolerate beside him the people who let him down," she said. "They should have been sacked."

The full extent of Dyachenko's influence on government policy and Kremlin personnel matters is almost impossible to gauge. Only rarely does she give interviews, and then only to the Russian TV stations that are controlled by two of Chubais' closest banker friends.

Newsday's requests through her friends and staff for an interview were ignored. But the attacks on her by the displaced Yeltsin cronies have had a cumulative effect. Russian newspapers are writing about her more and more—and not in the fawning manner usually reserved for the families of political leaders. Soviet-era Rossiya, in reviewing criticism leveled against Dyachenko, even included an allusion to King Lear, the ailing Shakespearean monarch betrayed by his ambitious daughters.

Not since the fashionable and outspoken Raisa Gorbacheva, wife of the last leader of the now-defunct Soviet Union, has a woman aroused such strong political malice. ■

Clinton caps comeback with convincing re-election

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all Americans. I wish him well and Godspeed."

Gore introduced the president as "a man from Hope who tonight becomes a man for history." He noted that Clinton was one of only six Democrats elected to two presidential terms, adding his name to "history's short list of great leaders of America."

The speeches were concluded with a display of fireworks. The crowd reveled late into the night of Clinton's greatest—and last—electoral triumph.

Dole conceded at 11:25 pm US time in a hotel ballroom in Washington. He said that he had just spoken to Clinton, whom he called "my opponent and not my enemy."

"I wished him well and pledged my support," Dole said, looking surprisingly energetic after an exhausting round-the-clock final four-day push. The crowd of mostly young supporters and volunteers repeatedly chanted, "Thank you, Bob."

Clinton took a commanding

lead in electoral votes from the very start, winning virtually every Eastern and Midwestern state, several by more than 20 points.

Clinton captured not only the major states he won four years ago—Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois and Michigan among them—but also Republican strongholds such as Florida, which he won, and Arizona, where he held a strong lead. Based on a combination of actual results and projections based on polling, Clinton gained the 270 electoral votes needed for victory when polls closed at 9 pm (US time) in 12 states around the country, including New York, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Perot, who ran on the ticket of "his self-created Reform Party while accepting \$29 million in public election funds, carried no states. The Texas billionaire, in his concession statement, said that his supporters should demand reform of the system of campaign finance that both parties had abused.

"We've got to keep the pres-

sure on," he said at his Dallas headquarters.

The exit poll interviews and Clinton's victory margin indicated that a majority of voters ultimately could find no compelling reason to unseat a man whom they find flawed but unthreatening, at times weak but always empathetic. The findings seem to validate that Clinton, more than any other figure of his political generation, has proved at once infuriating and incomparably seductive to the public.

Dole, although a valiant war hero and a legendary legislator, could not in four attempts at national office—once as then-President Ford's running mate in 1976, twice as an unsuccessful contender for the GOP presidential nomination and now this year as its standard-bearer—mold a coherent message or craft a persona that appealed to a majority of his countrymen.

Clinton won a larger percentage of the votes than he did in 1992—thanks to Reform Party candidate Ross Perot's losing half the votes he won four years ago. But

more voters—52 percent, according to the exit polls—said they were concerned or scared about his having a second term than the 46 percent who described themselves as excited or optimistic. And half of Clinton's own supporters said they had serious reservations about voting for him.

In Amman the government of Jordan welcomed on

Wednesday the results of the American presidential elections in which President Bill Clinton won a second term. Minister of Information Marwan Muasher said in a statement to Jordan News Agency (Petr) "while we congratulate President Clinton on this winning, we look forward for a boosted American role in moving the peace process forward to reach its only logical end, which is the conclusion of peace accords on all tracks that safeguard the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples."

Dr Muasher expected the American peace efforts to be intensified in Mr Clinton's second term since the American president is concerned with making peace and enjoys in this term a greater freedom of movement. Thus, Dr Muasher added, the peace process will certainly witness a new momentum in the coming months. ■

High hopes with moderate expectations await Cairo

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have to struggle against the currently poor state of regional political and economic relations. Two Israeli government ministers have announced that they will not attend the conference while West Bank industrialists are boycotting the event in protest at Israeli policies which have damaged the Palestinian economy severely and make the chance of any foreign investment increasingly remote.

Jordanian businessmen have also become increasingly reluctant to consider ventures with Israeli partners both in reaction to Israeli policies in the West Bank and Lebanon and because of the continuing barriers to Jordanian trade with both Palestine and Israel.

Even Jordan's Civil Aviation Authority has announced that while as a joint project the Aqaba airport has been priced at \$250 million, if purely Jordanian, the venture could cost as little as \$80 million, as strong an incentive as any investor would want to go national rather than regional.

The challenge facing Jordan, and the other participants in the Cairo conference, is to convince potential investors that its attractions as a stable, open economy, outweigh continuing regional instability and the fail-

ure of the peace process to make progress.

Jordan's private sector has changed its approach for Cairo with the 35-40 businessmen who have signed up planning to promote their projects individually rather than as a joint effort as they did in Amman. The Jordanian turnout is respectable but in general the mood in the business community is not positive and there are certainly not the high expectations of 1995.

Jordanian projects

- Production of potassium sulphate and di-calcium phosphate
- Production of potassium nitrate
- Glass sand production
- Gold exploration
- Copper exploration
- Kaolin/clay

Transport sector

- Aqaba-Wadi II & Al-Shidiya Railway Link
- Light rail system for Greater Amman
- Development of Aqaba airport
- Zarqa-Iraqi border railway

Telecommunications sector

- New telecommunications services
- Data network

Tourism sector

- Aqaba tourist area
- Dead Sea Tourist area

Water

- Water conveyance system from Disi to Amman

Industry and mining

- Production of magnesium oxide
- Magnesium metal plant

US foreign policy maintains steady

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El Sherif.

And for this to happen there must be a concerted Arab stand, one that could push and influence the direction of the peace process.

"The Arab world must work out a comprehensive Arab strategy to contain Likud so that it abides by the international law, this can be done and it should be done," says Abu Jaber.

El Sherif sees the Arab factor as crucial in all this. He says that it is only through a unified Arab stand that Europe can have a role and help the peace atmosphere in the Middle East. Further to that it can play a counterbalance to Israel which is supported by the Americans.

"I believe electing Clinton won't be a dramatic change for the policies of the US are influenced by many pressures, like

the European role, the awakening of the Arab world, and the Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza strip. These pressures will be more effective than the US presidential decisions," Faisal, an opposition deputy says.

But apart from the peace process, it is argued that the incumbent US foreign policy in the region will witness few changes. However, people are giving the Clinton administration, the benefit of the doubt at least for the time being. Izziden asks rhetorically whether Clinton has a different foreign policy initiatives, "what will happen to Libya, is he prepared to carry on with the same old policy?"

"I do not think that there will be a dramatic change regarding all these issues. But I think that there will be a slow change specifically in relation to Iraq," he concludes. ■

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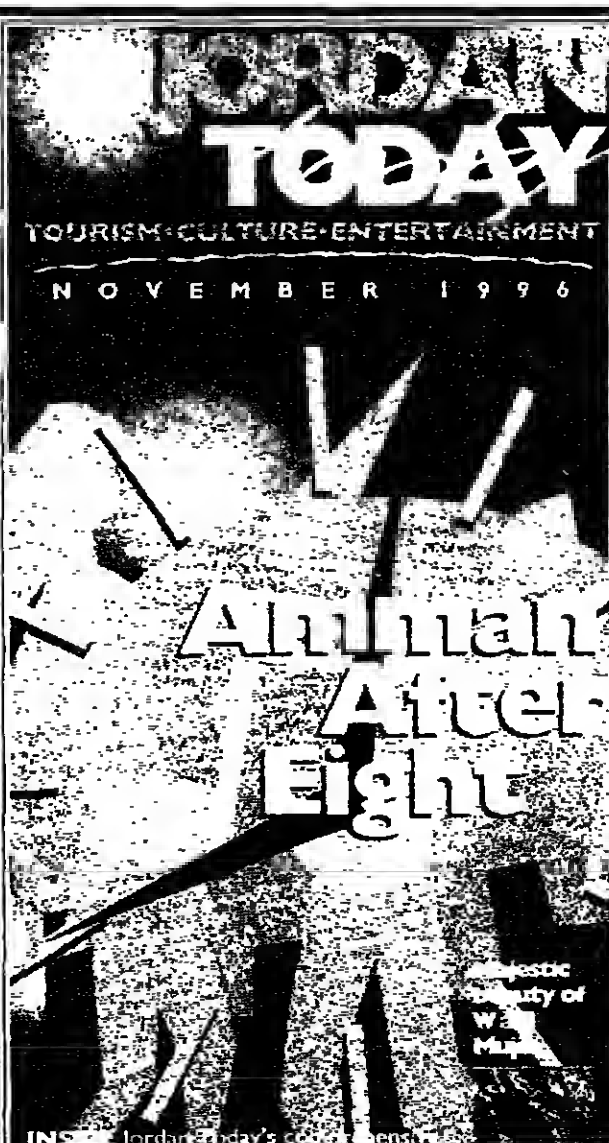
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Yeltsin's daughter develops liking

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President Yeltsin's daughter, Maria Yeltsina, is reported to have developed a liking for the Jordanian King Hussein during her visit to the Hashemite Kingdom.

The Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, who ended a two-day visit to Jordan last Sunday, said that the views of Jordan and Russia on the majority of regional and international issues are similar.

His visit to the country was part of a regional tour that included Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Israel and the Palestinian National Authority-controlled areas.

On Saturday, Mr Primakov met with His Majesty King Hussein and the Prime Minister, Mr Abdel Karim Al Khatib. He also met with HRH Crown Prince Hassan earlier on in the day.

During a press conference held Sunday, Mr Primakov said that Russia was not trying to compete with the US in Arab-Israeli peace-making, but he emphasized that Russia does not want to step on "anyone else's line."

He added that during his tour he was urged by Arab leaders for his country to play a more effective role in the peace process.

He pointed out that he delivered messages between Syria and Israel to reduce tension between the two countries.

Men acquitted in Wadi Al Mujib case
The Criminal Court has acquitted the two men that were accused of attacking a French diplomat in Wadi Al Mujib last year.

Salem Al Jaradat and Ahmed Al S'ouh were accused of firing at the diplomat and his wife who were picnicking at the time.

The presiding judge Abdel Rahman Tawfiq said that the court was satisfied that the bullet which was fired at the diplomat did not come from the weapon that was held by Salem Jaradat.

JORDAN WEEK



Primakov in Jordan

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Men acquitted in Wadi Al Mujib case
The Criminal Court has acquitted the two men that were accused of attacking a French diplomat in Wadi Al Mujib last year.

Salem Al Jaradat and Ahmed Al S'ouh were accused of firing at the diplomat and his wife who were picnicking at the time.

The presiding judge Abdel Rahman Tawfiq said that the court was satisfied that the bullet which was fired at the diplomat did not come from the weapon that was held by Salem Jaradat.

Christainity in government schools starts a "shy debate"

Since the early '70s, the Christian community has called for the teaching of the Christian religion in government schools. However this demand was brushed off, that is until today.

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer

THE DECISION of the government to allow the teaching of Christianity in government schools was warmly received by the Christian community in Jordan. However, Islamists are yet to make up their mind about such a decision.

Christians in Jordan number about 200,000, that is about eight percent of the population, while Sunni Muslims form the majority at 92 percent.

The three main Christian churches in Jordan are Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Greek Orthodox, yet the teaching of the Christian religion is only taught in private Christian schools.

Up till now only Islam as a religion is taught in government schools.

Since the early '70s, the Christian community has called for the teaching of the Christian religion in government schools. However this demand was brushed off, that is until today.

During his visit to the Ministry of Education last week, Prime Minister, Mr Abdel Karim Al Khatib, outlined the government intention to introduce a new method of religious education.

"Religious education is basic in the educational process, but it does not mean Islamic education alone," said Mr Kahariti.

"I hope you understand that education, Islamic or Christian, complement each other in finding common objectives."

Mr Kahariti said that the Ministry of Education should make sure that the process of introducing Christian teaching in government schools runs smoothly.

Such a decision is warmly received by Jordanian Christians as Monsignor Dr Raouf Al Najjar points out.

"Christianity and/or Islamic Education are an essential part of the educational process, it is a basic necessity because of its moral values," Monsignor Al Najjar added.

Christians are represented in Parliament, through the Christian quota. Nine members of the Lower House and four members in the Upper House are Christians.

During last year's seventh Lower House ordinary session, the Christian deputies proposed introducing legislation to teach Christianity as a subject in government schools, and to have an official holiday on Christmas Day on 25 December.

Their demands were entertained by the former Prime Minister Sherif (now Prince) Zaid Ben Shaker. However, a compromise was reached, he made the New Year Day, 1 January, an official holiday instead.

During that session the Islamists in the Lower House worked hard to bring down any measure that would introduce the teaching of Christianity in government schools.

They argued that it would be a step that strengthens the general social education of the members of the Christian community," said deputy Bassam Haddadin, who represents a Christian seat in Zatqa.

"I want more openness. All students should learn even if just a little bit, about other religions."

Official sources told The Star that the intention of the government is to introduce the teaching of Christianity as a subject in state schools but this still requires a lot of discussion and debate.

The source added that the government is optimistic because the initial reaction from the Islamists has not been hostile, and especially since the IAF accepts Christians within its rank and file.

Even, the Muslim Brotherhood have refused to comment directly on the issue.

"The subject is very sensitive, complicated, and needs the cooperation of all parties concerned," the movement's spokesman said.

"The movement is studying it from all its religious, political and national aspects."

Dr Ishaq Al Farhan, IAF secretary general, said the Islamic religion is the official religion of Jordan, according to the Constitution. But "it is possible for Christian students to have specific periods to learn about their religion."

However, he does not believe in teaching Christianity as a specific subject in public schools. Dr Farhan thinks it would be more productive to allocate specific periods for the study of religion from a comparative perspective and within the context of a national education curricula.

Dr Farhan believes that from a practical point of view it would be difficult to teach Christianity as a subject in government schools because of the expense that would be involved and the limited number of teachers.

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Mr Haddadin disagrees emphatically. "It is not true to say that the expense will be great. In Syrian schools for example, all denominations are taught."

He added, that "teaching Christianity would be wholly practical if it is thoroughly studied."

In Amman "we have a number of religious rehabilitation centres, which graduated tens of people who are qualified to teach Christianity," said Bishop Al Sayegh.

"Since a long time all the Christian denominations in Jordan adopted the 'Syrian curriculum', which is also accepted by the Ministry of Education," to teach in private schools.

Mr Al Sayegh added that expense is not an obstacle. "Christian schools teach the Islamic religion for its students and it pays the allowances of the teachers of these subjects."

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Chairman of Lower House committee is scathing about Likud government

By Hamdan Al Hajj
Special to the Star

THE LATEST attitude of the Israeli hardline government headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu implies that Israel is not really interested in peace-making.

Deputy Dr Fawzi Tueimah, the chairman of the Lower House Committee on Arab and International Affairs accuses the Israeli government of blocking the peace process.

"This government insists on re-negotiating issues that were previously approved by the former government such as the redeployment of Israeli troops in Hebron, and the release of detainees," he tells The Star.

The Israeli government should really be preparing for the final stage of the negotiations that includes discussions over the status of Jerusalem, he added.

Dr Tueimah says that the closure imposed on the West Bank and Gaza is inhumane and harms the Palestinian economy. Such Israeli measures, he says, have nothing to do with peace, and economic co-operation.

The Israeli obsession of security, indicates abnormal fears that are inconsistent with the current political situation and returns the region to the no-peace no-war situation. Israeli security and safety, won't be achieved unless a comprehensive peace is implemented. This requires her to recognize the rights of the whole Arab world and the Palestinians right to establish their independent state.

Jerusalem belongs to all monotheistic religions and believers from whatever religion must not be allowed to deal with this city as if it was their own, he adds. This is approved by the United Nations since 1948, Dr Tueimah says.

The international community rejects any attempt to divide Jerusalem or build more settlements.

Moreover, the eastern side of Jerusalem should certainly be the capital of the coming Palestinian independent state, he points out.

However, the Israeli government deals with the Palestinian nation as inhabitants and not as owners of their land.

Such a hardline policy formalizes the essence of the conflict and creates obstacles to any progress in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

The European interest in pushing forward the peace negotiations is a real indication of the jeopardy in the peace process, Dr Tueimah says.

Now that President Clinton was re-elected we are likely to see more pressure on Israel to declare its commitment to the peace process.

However, the region will remain tense as long as the peace process does not include all Arab states. Iraq which has a strategic importance is being excluded by Israel and the United States. Its role in the Middle East formula cannot be ignored, Dr Tueimah says.

Also, the issue of peace talks with Syria and Lebanon should be given more importance.

But he warns that it is Israel that will be the main loser so long as it operates under the principle of land for security.

Jordan was and will still be the most country affected by the events on the Palestinian side. What is happening in Palestine cannot be separated from what happens in Jordan.

The two nations has one destiny and Israel won't be able to divide them, Dr Tueimah maintains.

Dr Tueimah is confident that there will be stronger Jordanian-Palestinian co-ordination to counter the aggressive actions of the Likud government.



Tueimah

Ciller visits Amman soon

TURKISH DEPUTY Prime Minister/Minister of Foreign Affairs Tansu Ciller will make an official visit to Amman in the second week of November.

Accompanied by an official delegation comprising of senior officials, businessmen and mediators, the Turkish Ambassador in Amman Ahmet Omer said last Monday.

Mr Omer told Jordan News Ciller Agency (Petra) his country believes that bilateral cooperation could achieve good results for Jordan and Turkey in particular and the region in general, thus Turkey's keenness on including businessmen in this official delegation.

Turkish businessmen will hold meetings and talks with their Jordanian counterparts, Mr Omer added.

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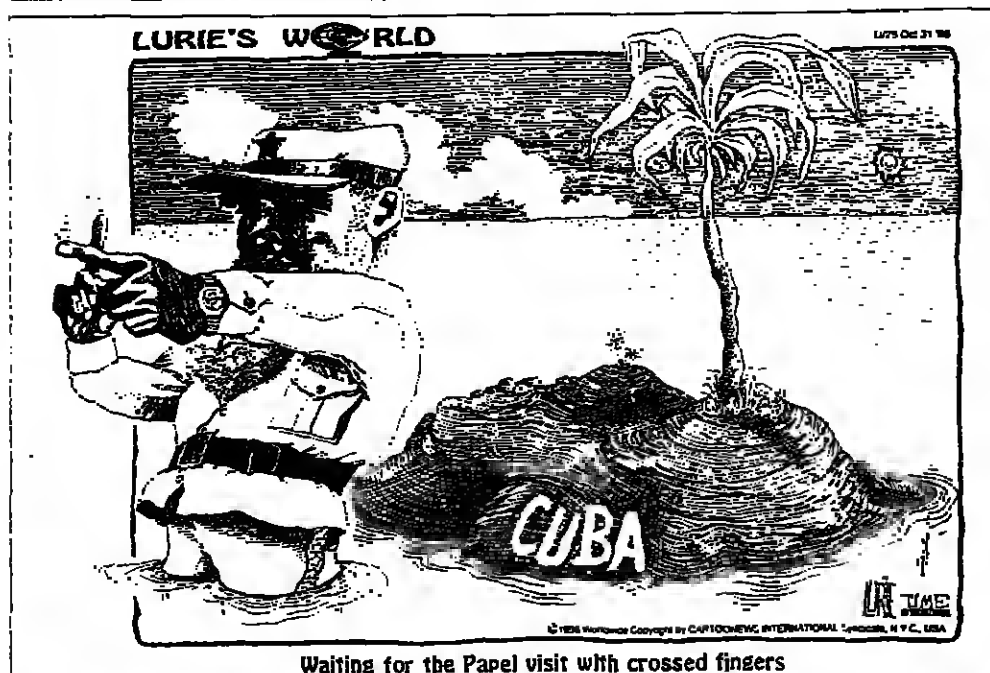
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Our Say...

What we expect from Mr Clinton

NOW THAT President Bill Clinton has been re-elected what are we to expect with regards to the paralyzed Middle East peace process? There is no doubt that Arab parties to the now faltering Madrid process see the victory of the incumbent president as a positive development after so many frustrating events that started with the assassination last year of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and culminated with the rise to power of a right-wing Likud-led government in Israel in May of this year.

The defeat of Labor leader Shimon Peres by Benjamin Netanyahu, an opponent to the peace process and a hard-liner, has led to a dangerous set-back to the five-year-old process. That process had given birth to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles and serious negotiations between Syria and Israel over the future of the occupied Golan Heights.

But with Netanyahu's assumption of power in Israel, by a narrow margin of votes revealing a deeply divided Israeli electorate, has reversed that process and put its future, and that of the region, in the balance.

The United States, the only key sponsor of the peace process, has failed to send a clear message to Netanyahu, who immediately unfroze Israel's controversial, and illegal, policy of building and expanding Jewish settlements, confiscating Arab lands, altering the Arab identity of East Jerusalem and negating the main points in the self-rule agreement, the Oslo Accords, with the Palestinians.

Washington's lethargy and ineptitude was traced to domestic issues: the presidential US elections and the candidates' dependency on Jewish votes in key states.

Still, President Clinton tried to put pressure on the rebellious Netanyahu, who never forgave Mr Clinton for backing Mr Peres in the May election. But the Washington summit last month was meant to boost Mr Clinton's image at home rather than corner Netanyahu.

As a result, the Israeli premier dragged his feet on the implementation of the Hebron agreement and his ministers made no secret that they wanted to renegotiate that agreement, and many others, thus violating the letter and spirit of the Oslo Accords and the Declaration of Principles.

There is almost an international consensus that the present Israeli government is threatening the survival of the Middle East process. There is a worrying feeling that Netanyahu's fiery and provocative rhetoric could drag the region to war and chaos. With this in mind, the Clinton administration must act swiftly to save the process from collapse. It must do this by making it clear to Netanyahu that he risks damaging Israel's relations with the US and the rest of the world if he continues with his policies.

He must be made to understand that he will not be allowed to wreck the peace process and push the region to the verge of war. Mr Clinton must not waver from doing so immediately. Now he can afford to do this. ■



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat receives British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind in his office in Gaza, Sunday.

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Israel's ambassador in Cairo seeks to spread the word!

By Samir Raafat

ZVI MAZEL'S foreign postings read like a drama novel. If the president's extinction in Mazel's first country of posting was spared, the leaders of the regimes in his third and fourth postings were brutally killed in front of the TV cameras. Mazel replaces Egyptian-born David Sultan who was named Israel's ambassador to Canada earlier this year and left Cairo in September. The post of Ambassador to Egypt had been vacant since.

Mazel, a career diplomat, is Israel's sixth envoy to Egypt since the signing of the peace treaty in March 1979. Of his six predecessors, two were political appointees. Knesset Member Elihu Ben-Elissar, a hardline Likud hawk, was Israel's first ambassador to Egypt in 1980. He was recently appointed ambassador to Washington. Meanwhile, Tel Aviv University's Shimon Shamir, who founded and headed the University's Institute for Peace Studies and regarded a Labor dove, was Israel's third ambassador to Egypt 1988-90. He resigned his post over policy differences with Yitzhak Shamir's Likud government. In 1995, he was appointed Israel's first envoy to Jordan. The other three ambassadors to Egypt were Moshe Sasson, Ephraim Dowek and David Sultan, all three professional diplomats.

Mazel's action-packed career started with a military coup in Tananarive, capital of the island republic of Madagascar where Zvi was posted between 1969-72. The diplomat and his wife were there long enough to give birth to their third child and to see President Philibert Tsiranana huddle off into exile. Shortly after, the Mazels and their children—Yossi and Malagasy-born Tami—left for Paris where nothing consequential happened during their only Western European tour of duty.

In 1980, the Mazels were sent to Cairo. It was there that their son Yossi celebrated his bar mitzvah in the small Maadi synagogue, a first since the last such celebration took place in 1963. A few months later, the Mazels, still in Maadi, watched in disbelief as Anwar Sadat, the architect of peace with Israel, was gunned down during the live TV coverage of the Sixth of October Victory Parade.

by a Jewish terrorist as *déjà vu*. The Ambassador's wife, Michelle was born during turbulent times in Poitiers, France. This was 1940 when half of France was occupied by Germany. Her family spent most of the war years in the south of France where her demobilized father practiced medicine. After the war they returned to Paris where Michelle grew up and studied law and political science at the University of

ter Shimon Peres qualified it as "refreshing".

Later, Michelle went on to write her second thriller which she tentatively titled *Sirens over Jerusalem* based on the Gulf war and Scud attacks.

After Bucharest, Zvi Mazel was appointed chief of the East Europe department at the Israeli Foreign Affairs. From there he covered Russia and the European countries of the former Soviet Union. Later, he was made responsible for the Central Asian republics before assuming the directorship of the African Affairs desk.

When the peace process looked like it was still advancing, Mazel called for regional economic development as a means of bridging differences between Arabs and Jews. He held that the best solution for his country's running trade deficit (about \$5 billion in 1993/4) was the need to cover it with exports.

"Israel has the image of an advanced, successful example of a country that developed fast. People look to us for expertise in technology and agriculture. By helping these countries, we also help fight anti-Semitism." Mazel also considers that in order to realize this undertaking, "Israel needs to be everywhere. Through its trade attaches, the Foreign Ministry can help pave the way to economic prosperity."

On another note, Mazel was quoted as saying "Israel must use its embassies to spread the word about what's good about Israel." If indeed, this is the case, we are all anxiously waiting to hear from Israel's new ambassador to Cairo about 'just what is it that's good about Israel these days?'

Samir W. Raafat is an Egyptian historian and commentator. He contributed this article to *The Star*.

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The third presidential upheaval occurred in Bucharest in 1989. Zvi Mazel had just been appointed his country's ambassador to Romania, then the only satellite state in the Soviet bloc that had full relations with Israel. A few weeks after his arrival the bloody events started around Xmas week. After 45 years of communism, Romania had decided to rid itself of Nicolai Ceausescu, its despotic ruler for 24 years.

The country was suddenly wrecked by revolution. And just as the Mazels thought things were returning to normal, Bucharest was deluged by torrential rains which flooded the embassy residence. This was followed by a killer quake.

Having grown accustomed to an agitated lifestyle, the Mazels may have surmised the 4 November 1995 killing of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

Paris. It was at the Institute of Political Science where the scholarly-looking petite Mazel met her red-haired husband-to-be.

In 1966 they traveled to Israel where Zvi started to work for the foreign ministry and Michelle got a job in the government printing office in West Jerusalem. She later headed the Israeli Foreign Ministry Wives Association.

It was after they returned from Egypt that Michelle worked as a translator and journalist. During her husband's posting in Romania she wrote her first book *Stone Moon* which she completed in April 1991. Written in English, the book is set in the Jewish area. The fast-paced suspense story deals with the implications of the infidels, the PLO and a year for peace which is perhaps why former Prime Minis-

A View from America

Bridge to foreign policy, a necessity

By Carrie Nelle Moye
Star US correspondent

US CITIZENS on 5 November have not just a national election. We have designated the most powerful person in the world, as leader of the only existing super power. In doing so, we could not examine the candidates in the light of domestic issues alone but their stands on global concern: nuclear disarmament; environment; peace in the Middle East and other areas of major conflict; poverty in the Third World and the dangers inherent therein; energy and alternative sources of energy; future relations with Japan, Western Europe, and Russia; expansion of NATO to include former Soviet satellite states; terrorism and relations with states hostile to the US and/or accused of terrorism: Cuba, North Korea, Libya, Iraq, and Iran.

Add to these are the issue of human rights, especially in countries friendly to the US such as Israel (the Palestinians); Turkey, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states (treatment of women, freedom of the media and religion); and many Latin American countries. To all this, mix resolving the economic differences with Western allies and Japan, plus the emerging tigers of Asia: China, Vietnam, Singapore, India and others.

Recent months have revealed sharp differences between the US and other powers on the Middle East peace process (especially Chirac's visit in the name of Europe), the Cuban embargo, and on our dealings with Iraq and Iran. The controversy on such issues between the US and others has become louder and more sharply defined. Canada threatened counter measures against US companies if the US punished Canadian companies doing business in Cuba. Europe refused to abide by or even respect US legislation against trade with Iran.

Already sharp rhetoric accelerated recently between US and French diplomacy concerning Warren Christopher's tour in Africa which was seen as a last ditch effort to buy Africa's support

in unseating the UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to win for Clinton additional black support (read that votes).

The list is long. Clinton's administration slipped into such international controversies because it has assumed the role of global instructor, policeman, and legislator. Being the only superpower is not easy. There is no equal adversary to be blamed for failures. If one is at the summit of power, one has no choice but to act according to that role, despite the knowledge that any movement on the summit may lead downward—and certainly he controversial.

Clinton has been very docile on foreign policy in the past few months. His attention was focused on the elections, which polls show he should win handsomely.

This docility was most evident on the Middle East peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, Syrians, and Lebanese. The Likud hard-liner, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has visited the

White House twice since taking office early last summer. In both cases he expressed opinions that contradicted established US policy, guarantees, and promises.

He was adamantly outspoken while Clinton preferred to remain almost silent, as though the President were the guest and not the host. Was that because of elections? Probably. But that also was in the sunset of Clinton's first term as President.

Now a new Clinton should emerge. He will enjoy relative freedom from lobbyists. He will enjoy the benefit of experience. He will have a national mandate to go, go, go, and accomplish the job for which he was elected.

US domestic issues abound: poverty; crime; drugs; housing; medical care; unemployment; environment; energy. But tranquility for Americans cannot become a reality if the world remains in turmoil. There will be no economic prosperity for America unless trade wars are replaced by cooperation and mutual benefit, by equitable exchanges rather than cut-throat competition. America will have to lead the world in consultation versus confrontation and imposition of its opinions when dealing with other powers.

America must understand the grievances and problems of the poor, oppressed and dispossessed—the root of terrorism—in order to live at peace with itself and the world. We cannot barricade ourselves, our embassies and institutions in and outside America.

Clinton faces an enormous task improving life in America per se and adding a healthy portion of wisdom, justice, and benevolence to the crown of power America now wears.

Clinton has the means, opportunity, and experience to do so. He has the choice of being recorded in a future history book either as "A President who remained in the White House for eight years" or "The President who truly established a more equitable new world order."

Negating human rights in peace negotiations

By Francis A. Boyle

PURSUANT to the self-styled Dayton Peace Accord, on 14 December 1995 the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was carved up in Paris by the United Nations, the European Union, the United States, Russia and the many other states in attendance, despite the United Nations Charter, the Nuremberg Principles, the Genocide Convention, the Four Geneva Conventions and their two Additional Protocols, the Racial Discrimination Convention, the Apartheid Convention, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as two overwhelmingly favorable protective Orders issued by the International Court of Justice on behalf of Bosnia on 8 April and 13 September 1993. This second World Court Order effectively prohibited such a partition of Bosnia by the vote of 13 to 2.

Bosnia was sacrificed on the altar of Great Power politics to the Machiavellian god of expedience. In 1938 the Great Powers of Europe did the exact same thing to Czechoslovakia at Munich. The partition of that nation state did not bring peace to Europe then. Par-

titution of Bosnia and Herzegovina will not bring peace to Europe now.

This UN-sanctioned execution of a UN Member State violated every known principle of international law that had been formulated by the international community in the post-World War II era. This nihilistic carve-up of Bosnia indicates that the current regime of international law and organizations set up by the United States and Europe to direct reaction to the genocidal horrors of the Second World War is now in the process of gradual but irretrievable disintegration.

In addition to winning two World Court Orders for Bosnia, the author, a professor of International Law, served as legal adviser to President Alija Izetbegovic, and to the collective Bosnian Presidency at the Owen-Stoltenberg negotiations in Geneva during the summer of 1993. There he was in charge of negotiating the so-called "package" of documents for Bosnia. His latest book is *The Bosnian People Charge Genocide*, Aletheia Press, 1996.

Middle East Beat

by Khairi Janbe

Citizenship package

IT IS a package deal for the individual to be a citizen. Yet, the notion of citizenship is linked to civil society, ruled by laws that regulate the balance between rights and obligations.

In our constitutional monarchy, the creation of a modern civil society, capable of handling future challenges, confident in its self-image, relying on the traditions of stability and moderation have proved to be major factors in our resilience. But, we cannot assume that we have reached our final aim, and our future of social development must be extinguished, though many would like that to happen, for the task ahead remains more difficult.

The first paradigm that comes to mind is in the decision of the government to teach Christian education in public schools to Christian pupils. Clearly, this did not emerge in vacuum, and it is most rewarding for all those institutes which have been created by HRH Crown Prince Hassan, in further inter-faith dialogue and put on the Arab agenda, the case of the Arab Christians.

The wise decision of the government pays homage to the tireless efforts of the Crown Prince and his position, which had always maintained that the Christians of the region and particularly in Jordan, are Arabs first, and consequently, their citizenship in Jordan includes the right of educating their children with government support, rather than shouldering the whole responsibility on private schools with missionary origins. The Christians of Jordan are loyal citizens and none of their rights will be allowed to be compromised.

Enlightened thought, coupled with enlightened action is the mark of a civilized system, and there is every indication that Jordan is heading on the correct path of building a modern state system in which the citizen is the cornerstone. Jordanians are of many origins and creeds, they are of different religious backgrounds, yet, we seem still, to recognize the subtle, and negate the most obvious and that is the fact that there are also women in our society, well integrated into the system of citizenship, with awesome tasks and crippling obligations but without the freedom and equality that they absolutely deserve. We shall stand as having short changed ourselves if we do not take note and action as far as the "woman issue" is concerned.

Jordan has integrated ethnic as well as religious minorities, but in this case we are not talking about a minority, but rather a large section of our citizens who seem to be missing out on the privileges of their citizenship. One must admit, that we have taken courage from the question of Christian education, to press forward the agenda of women in Jordan at the onset of the 21st century.

It is important at the same time, to clear any misconception regarding the terminology that one uses in terms of "freedom" and equality, for one feels that the most straightforward and logical question, has been turned around by ignorance and suspicion, into one of the most sensitive issues to be discussed in our society.

Freedom remains a matter of choice which is imposed by the dictates of necessity. When a woman chooses her partner in life, she is surely reflecting one of the most basic tenets of the recognition of her humanity, and if she chooses to be veiled or otherwise must not be the issue determined by certain minds who judge the job qualification by the superficiality of attire. Her right to be educated is a simple human right that cannot be touched, and her sacrifices on the altar of honour by the habitual bunch of retarded criminal individuals must be severely punished, for is the law to serve the citizen, or is the citizen to serve the law? We are optimistic, and we are on the right track. ■

By Samir Raafat

Mohammed Shebl 1949-1996

The last reel continues

CAIRO—Egyptian movie director, film critic, talk-show host and radio personality Mohammed Shebl died on October 3, 1996 from cirrhosis of the liver. His films include Anyab (fangs), Al Tawiza (the talisman), Al Kabous (the nightmare), Gharam wa Intiqam bel Satour (Love and revenge with a cleaver).

A few weeks before he died, Mohammed Shebl had attended the Locarno Film Festival where Al Qadiya (the trial) was screened. This was one of the last works in which Shebl had collaborated with film director Youssef Shahin.

Mohammed Shebl and I went to the same school in Maadi for several years where we were in the same grade. Together with our classmate, Serge Walberg, we formed a threesome.

While Serge and I were native Maadites, the Shebl family had arrived from Japan where Mohammed's father had been counselor at the Egyptian Embassy. Ever since his Tokyo days, Mohammed was enamored with everything Far Eastern. He would occasionally invite us over to his parents' flat on Road 6 for Chinese meals where we ate with chopsticks listening to what sounded like colliding pots and pans and wailing ghosts.

"This," Mohammed would inform us condescendingly, "is Madame Butterfly's command performance in Cantonese." Whether it was Cantonese or Burmese it sounded equally awful.

He would invariably show us dwarf-like plants and figurines unearthing unintelligible words that sounded like "bon-zai", "kamikaze" and "kabouki". Nevertheless, despite our disbelief for his oriental food and alcohol-free Saki, Serge and I returned to Mohammed's each weekend.

Besides his Sino-Japanese music and suspicious edibles (you must have been really hungry in order to munch whatever it was you were served in lacquered bowls) there was the wonderful Grundig recorder. None of us had seen such a magical contraption before. These were the Nasser days and Egypt was light years behind in telecommunications and sound systems.

I remember how one day we listened in awe to the entire soundtrack of Youssef Shahin's movie "Gamila Bohrid". She was the Algerian freedom fighter who had become a post-colonialism world legend. I think from that time onwards Mohammed was a devoted devotee of Shahin's whom none of us knew, for our movie knowledge was limited to Western and American epics, most of which we had seen at the Maadi Sporting Club outdoor cinema. Mohammed, on the other hand, was quoting Cecil B. de Mille, Fassbinder and von Steimberg. We had no clue at the time that years later Mohammed would himself become a rising movie director. Meanwhile, he would ostensibly bombast us with stories of his controversial icon Y. Shahin. But then Mohammed loved anything contentious which is why his two first movies (variations of the Rocky Horror Show) were deemed as such by unmerciful critics who failed to understand Shebl's Mephistophelian genre.

It was at Mohammed Shebl's that I also met the English historian Arnold Toynbee. He was a friend of Mohammed's father, Ambassador Fouad Shebl. One day, Serge Walberg, whose family decided to emigrate to France in 1964, boldly asked Toynbee for a reference to get him into a school in the UK. Toynbee was most obliging and Serge ended up in a boarding school in Ramsgate in England, which, incidentally, he hated.

Another person we ran into at Mohammed's house was his older and only sibling, Said. I don't ever recall seeing Said in anything but his pyjamas. He never left the house, most of the time holed up in his room which was off bounds. One day at school we were told that Said had committed suicide. Mohammed never spoke of him again. It was as though he had been betrayed or abandoned. From that day onwards Mohammed, now the only son, seldom spoke of his family. In 1964 he left Egypt to join his father, somewhere in the Far East. It would be several years before we met again.

From the grapevine I learned Mohammed was studying Chinese and Russian literature or

something equally exotic. This was his Fu Manchu period. Later, still sporting his drooping Chinese mustache, he told me he had taken the Trans-Siberian Express from Moscow to Beijing. That was as good a place as any to practice Russian, Mandarin and Cantonese. Mohammed had a good grasp of all three. In typical diplomat fashion he followed his father's footsteps and spent several months in the United States as a rookie Egyptian diplomat. But his foreign service pursuit somehow took a turn for the worse. He hated the rigidity of officialdom and could not hack the bureaucracy. He had also divorced his young bride.

Released from career and marital obligations he went into music and film. Mohammed appeared on Radio Cairo's European Service simultaneously hosting talk-shows, plays, and endless retrospectives on the Beatles. If anyone knew the size of the Beatles' socks it was Mohammed, for he had become Egypt's foremost authority on the celebrated British pop group. Ever

since Egypt's first groupie band—"The Mass"—was formed in the 1960s Mohammed was right there at the center of Cairo's rock music scene. The Mass, which was composed of Tarek "Ricky" Nour (now Americana), Ashraf Salmawi (presently artist in UK), Mourad Rushdi (accountant in the Gulf), and the Amir Mansour (died from broken spine resulting from bad fall in Club Med's swimming pool), relied on Mohammed Shebl for promotion and the management of its well-attended concerts. Mohammed was going to be the group's "Brian Epstein".

One of the upshots of driving down Maadi's Cornish was that you could hear Mohammed's voice blasting out from the radio. What better way to start off your 9 to 5 day than listening to the darning and licentious diatribes of Radio Cairo's *enfant terrible*. By the late 1980s he had become the undisputed star of the breakfast talk-show circuit. By now Mohammed had plunged into showbiz, wallet and life savings first.

Alas, his first movie bombed depleting him from his financial resources with over 100,000 pounds disappearing out of the window. The showbiz Gods were definitely not on Mohammed's side. His karma ran out on him again when one day the bell rang: "Mohammed Bey, look out of the window, there's been an accident." He looked and there was his car flattened by a large tree which had decided to commit hara-kiri on Mohammed's brand new uninsured car. Naturally, it was a Japanese make.

The pile of glass, metal and upholstery was Mohammed's second and last car. From then on it was taxis and auto-stops. Since most of Maadi knew him, hitching a ride into town was no big deal. The number of times I stopped to pick him from in front of

his street corner only to drop him half an hour later at the television building were countless. It was during these fortuitous encounters that I had the benefit of a pre-emptive to various screenplays or movie scripts. Some were more misanthropic than others. But because of their hilarious characters these rides were among the shortest into town lasting only a few minutes or so it seemed. One day in 1983 he asked me to appear as an extra in his movie *The Talisman* together with our mutual friend the American author and traveler extraordinaire Cassandra Vivian. This was one of the few times I watched Mohammed as he performed behind the camera shouting orders in typical Dom De Luise (Blazing Saddles, 1973) fashion.

It was on one of these random drives 10 years later that Mohammed asked me if I had anything publishable for the *Egyptian Gazette* where he worked at the time. He had been the originator of the refreshing and biting series "Between a Rock and a Hard Place" as well as his by now very famous "Reel Talk". In those days I was writing the occasional article (long ramblings, as some of my friends say) for the *Al-Ahram Weekly*. It was also then that we discussed in earnest the co-production of an Arabic Movie Almanac/Guide which was never realized.

In the days that followed I would slip feature articles under Mohammed's door hoping he would deliver it to the *Gazette*. I purposefully avoided the bell for fear of being subjected to some more Shababesque parables or to some experimental Chinese delicatessen. Sometimes he would catch me in the act and I would then be subjected to both. But because of Mohammed's exceptionally good laughs and whimsical stories punctuated with a variety of four letter expletives, I somehow managed to swallow the "Shahin Chop Suey".

Mohammed's perversely witty, astute and acerbic interpretations on what was going on around us whether in Egypt or the Middle East was unique. I do not doubt for a minute that *The World According to Shebl* in book form or screenplay would have been a big commercial success. Certainly much more original than the feeble attempts put out by his better known peers

and would be mentor. By the time I had the benefit of a regular column in the *Egyptian Mail*, Mohammed had defected to the competition so that in fact we had simply traded column space. Whenever we would meet after "the swap" we immediately compared notes. "I have been de-fanged... I am muzzled... I am cast," he would bellow in the car referring to the reduced latitude he had at his newspaper. Not at all surprising since at the *Gazette* he had had absolute editorial freedom which brought out the best and most creative in him. "One day I will return to the *Gazette* and boy will I give its readers something to chew on" was what Mohammed told me on one of our last rides into town. "Yes, yes, I've heard it all before" was my hurried reply, for I had grown used to Mohammed's moods: up on Mondays and down on Wednesdays interspersed with a lot of "Jo this" and "Shahin that".

During the past 18 months Mohammed had been working on a documentary on "Jo" which meant filming Youssef Shahin on any ordinary day doing the most simple of chores like puffing a cigarette, scratching his hair or reading a newspaper. As though to comfort Mohammed for this strenuous artistic endeavor I would state that "When Shahin is gone this will be a winner and perhaps 'one day' you will recoup some of the moneys you lost thanks to his inappropriate advice." I was referring to Mohammed's fated first film which had had the blessings of his mentor but had bombed royally. His replies would be an indifferent or less than enthusiastic "Who knows?!" as though he already knew he wouldn't be around to see the fruition of his Shahin labor.

Sadly, the "one day" will never be and even worse, no one has done a documentary on Shebl. As for his resuming "Reel Talk" it never happened. Instead, I find myself with the downhearted task of writing Mohammed's eulogy in "his" *Egyptian Gazette* for the benefit of his disbelieving fans, friends, neighbors and colleagues none of whom have forgotten his punchy articles, fiery editorials, controversial avant garde movies, hilarious talk-shows and yes, his excellent Beatles retrospects.

As his favorite pop group put it so well in their hit song "Hello, Good-bye," it was now our turn to bid Mohammed Shebl, so long and good-bye. ■

Egyptian Gazette

Scenes from the classic film *The First Cairo Revolt*.

Radical artist spurs Hong Kong to confront its identity

By Maggie Farley
LA Times, Washington Post
News Service

HONG KONG—When artist Pun Sing Lui poured red paint over a statue of Queen Victoria and bashed in her nose with a hammer, some Hong Kong artists turned up their heels.

"It's not art, it's vandalism," sniffed one art critic of the move.

"It's like an act from the Cultural Revolution," said Johnson Chang, a gallery curator who has fostered avant-garde art in Hong Kong, referring to the period of upheaval in China from 1966-1976 when Red Guards destroyed artworks they called "feudal relics." "Hong Kong artists tend to be more private in their approach—more complex, more subtle."

The police thought Pun was just plain crazy. Covered head to toe in red paint himself, he spent two nights in a psychiatric institution before being sentenced to 28 days in jail.

Extreme, revolutionary or even nuts, Pun managed to focus Hong Kong's spotlight on the arts community, which usually scrapes by on the fringes of this commercial city.

And though some of his own colleagues distanced themselves from the radical 27-year-old with his shaved head and stark ideals, he spurred them—and the rest of Hong Kong—to confront their shifting identity in the final months before China reclaims the territory on July 1, 1997.

"People's reactions to his act were, in a sense, answering the question: 'Who are we?'" said Hong Chin Tin, a political commentator.

As Chinese people under British colonial rule for the past 150 years, Hong Kong people's loyalties are decidedly mixed.

Many here, for example, viewed the queen's statue not as a symbol of oppressive rule, as Pun did, but almost fondly, using it as a benign backdrop for family snapshots in Victoria Park. More offensive to participants discussing Pun's "exhibition" at an art symposium were his Cultural Revolution-style tactics that so many one-time Chinese refugees in Hong Kong had fled.

"The absence of outrage means we're not British, and we're not Chinese like the mainland," Hong said. "We're somewhere in an uncharted territory in between."

The impending change in sovereignty—and identity—is a theme that dominates everyday life in Hong Kong and the territory's art as well.

A sample of titles of recent art exhibitions and dance performances tells the tale: "6/30"—referring to the date of the past to warn about what might come next; "Being China, Being Hong Kong"; and "Life in a Schizophrenic City."

This month, one gallery will sponsor an exhibit focusing on Hong Kong's past: in December, another will have a show looking at Hong Kong's future.

"It seems we are obsessed," said Wong Shun Kit, an installation artist who came to Hong Kong from China 13 years ago.

"Floating," one of his recent exhibitions, juxtaposed three versions of Hong Kong's map floating on water—one was a barren plot inhabited by snakes—and helium-filled figures drifting above. He observed that "1997 is part of every day's conversation. People speculate about what will happen next; little changes are reported in the newspaper each morning—we can never escape it. So we take it as an inspiration. It forces us to confront the future with urgency."

Long seen as indifferent to

their Chinese roots, or even willfully amnesiac, Hong Kong artists are finally delving into the territory's hybrid legacy.

Suddenly they are appropriating their cultural history and throwing it back, transformed, in the face of Beijing.

In his installation for the exhibit, "Being China, Being Hong Kong," Wong, 43, looks at the past to warn about what might come next: A haloed Mao Tse-tung waves a mechanized arm at adoring masses; next to him stands Confucius, whose ideas about unwavering respect for parents were transformed by Mao into a kind of political worship.

As China tries to stir up loyalty to the motherland in Hong Kong, Wong warns of blind nationalism—an easy path in an uncertain time.

"Hong Kong is like China's child, but we must be sure we can mature, progress and not fall backward," he said, switching into staccato English, his fourth language. "We must continue to be able to stand up to the mother and keep our freedom."

The transition to the July 1, 1997, Chinese takeover is shadowed by an earlier date: June 4, 1989, the day that Chinese tanks crushed a pro-democracy protest in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, creating doubt among Hong Kong people that their future rulers would respect the territory's freedoms.

In an attempt to deconstruct the conflicted nationalistic feelings percolating in Hong Kong, Oscar Ho, director of the Hong Kong Arts Center, invited established artists such as Wong, as well as schoolchildren, to respond to the theme of "Being China, Being Hong Kong."

"We wanted to show the ambiguities of culture and dismantle the nationalism a bit—to ask, 'What do you mean when you talk about China?'" Ho said. "And in the process of addressing China, a quite distinctive picture of Hong Kong emerged."

Hong Kong, Ho said, is exceedingly adaptive, embracing all kinds of sensibilities. It has an ability to digest, reinterpret and rearrange—a synthesis that some interpret as a lack of

viewpoint.

But the notion of conflicted identity in the older artists' work was clear. Their offerings ranged from a series of images from Chinese history that can only be viewed through distorted mirrors to an evening gown fashioned from bandages and Chinese New Year cards to represent the wounds and the joy that come with being Chinese.

The main theme of the children's art was fear. Tanks scribbled in crayon rumbled through Hong Kong boushoids; another painting depicted a grand country with skyscrapers and rocket ships—and a tiny child in the corner with a gagged mouth.

The fear of censorship is a dark backdrop to the frenzied creations in the year before the hand-over.

"Who knows what will come next," said Ban Cheong, 31, an organizer of Hong Kong's Young Artists Association. "Maybe after next year, there will be no more ironic use of Mao, no parodies of Deng." Xiaoping, China's paramount leader.

Cheong is preparing 97 life-size, human-shaped lanterns, rounded and weighted at the bottom so they will rock in the wind but not fall. They will be illuminated by ultraviolet light. Cheong plans to arrange them close together, so the movement of one will affect the others crowded nearby. They will move the way a rumor ripples through Hong Kong, the way a flock of sheep responds when spooked. The display will stand for more than a month, until 1997. Then the light will go out.

While the unknowns ahead prompt anxiety not only about censorship but also about general support for the arts under the new government, the possible limits are—in themselves—inspiring. Cheong said, arguing: "A mainland artist has said that we squander our freedom. Perhaps it will be good to have limits to push against. Conflict can be inspiring."

Hot Property Action star Van Damme has no time to build



Van Damme with his wife in better days

By Ruth Ryon
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

Jean-Claude Van Damme, who is shooting the adventure-spy film "The Colony" with Dennis Rodman and Mickey Rourke, has put on the market the Beverly Hills lot where he had planned to build a house. He has priced the lot at \$2 million.

Van Damme expects to spend more time in Europe and live only part time in Los Angeles, so it doesn't make sense for him to build a large house here, a source said.

His next movie, "Bloodstone," is scheduled to start filming this winter in Nice, France, Toronto, and New York. "The Colony," which is being shot in France and Greece, is due to be released next spring.

Van Damme stars in the action-adventure "Maximum Risk," released in September, and he starred and made his directing debut in "The Quest," out earlier this year.

Known as "The Muscles From Brussels," the former European karate champion started appearing in action films in the '80s and is said to

make \$10 million a picture.

He is 36 and has three children. His fourth wife sued him for divorce last June.

The family was living in the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles when he bought the one-acre lot with city views in 1994 from Thomas Pollock, then chairman of the motion picture group at MCA Inc. In August, Pollock was named chairman of the American Film Institute.

The lot was also owned at one time by media tycoon David Geffen, who had planned to build there but then bought late movie mogul Jack Warner's Beverly Hills estate, sources say.

Nana Visitor, in her fourth season playing Major Kira Nerys on the sci-fi adventure series "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine," and Alexander Siddig, who plays Dr. Julian Bashir on the show, have purchased a four-bedroom house in the Los Feliz section of Los Angeles for about \$650,000, sources say.

Visitor, 39, has appeared in a number of TV shows since the mid-1980s and had a regular role in the 1990 sitcom "Working Girl," with Sandra Bullock in the lead.

Siddig, in his early 30s, also has been on the syndicated sci-fi series since it began.

The couple had a son in September. Visitor's pregnancy was written into the show, with her character becoming a surrogate mother for a crew mate. The attending doctor was Bashir.

Visitor also has a 4-year-old son from her marriage to actor-dancer Nick Maccus.

Built in 1928, the Mediterranean-style three-story house

that Visitor and Siddig bought has a gym-guest room in about 3,300 square feet. It also has a pool and spa.

Visitor's former home, a walled and gated Spanish-style house with four bedrooms in 2,700 square feet, was listed at just under \$500,000. Located in the Sunset Strip area, that house was also built in the 1920s but has been completely refurbished.

Gena Lee Nolin, who plays Neely Capshaw on "Baywatch," and her husband, video producer Greg Fahlan, have bought a \$500,000 house in the Laurel Canyon area of Los Angeles, sources say.

Nolin, 24, is in her second season on "Baywatch." She previously appeared on "The Young and the Restless" and was a model on "The Price Is Right."

Built in 1990, the Hollywood Hills home has five bedrooms in 3,600 square feet.

Tobe Hooper, director of the cult classic "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre" (1974), "Poltergeist" (1982) and of the new NBC series "Dark Skies," has sold his home of 14 years in the Benedict Canyon section of Los Angeles for \$685,000, sources say.

Hooper, in his late 40s, is leasing in Sherman Oaks while looking for a larger house, a source said.

The 3,000-square-foot house that he sold has a screening room, two bedrooms and maid's quarters. Among the comments on the \$699,000 listing: "Seller is a cigar smoker." The buyers were described as a couple in their 20s who own a clothing manufacturing company. ■

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The Star <http://www.arabia.com/Star>
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On Line

Arabia.On.Line's new structure keeps it on top

By Zeid Nasser
Star Staff Writer

ARABIA.ON.Line, the leading source on Arab and Islamic information on the Internet, has finalized its incorporation as an independent company and has recruited professional staff to provide a wide-spectrum of Internet and World Wide Web services.

After being a division of Arabian Communications & Publishing (ACP), for a little over a year, Arabia.On.Line's operation expanded greatly since the beginning of this year, due to the growth in demand for its services. As a result, the natural step ahead was to create the suitable structure to handle the volume of incoming business, on the one hand, and to secure the base necessary to accommodate the fast-paced of advancements and developments.

"We have expanded the management and shareholding at Arabia.On.Line, incorporating leading Arab investors from different countries. This will provide Arabia.On.Line with an even more pan-Arab character," said Mr. Khalid Tabaza, Publisher at Arabia.On.Line.

Arabia.On.Line's new internal structure is made up of three main divisions. First, there is the Editorial Department which is responsible for providing content and regularly updating it. Through continued follow-up with information sources, including magazines and newspapers which publish electronic editions at Arabia.On.Line, the Editorial Department guarantees regular updates to serve the millions of users who log into Arabia.On.Line every month.

On another track, Arabia.On.Line is establishing its own team of reporters and correspondents, to provide original material, exclusively for Arabia.On.Line. This is part of Arabia.On.Line's aim to deliver unique material that covers the political, economic and general interest topics that affect the Arab World. It also highlights the different aspects of Arab culture. Like any other public medium, Arabia.On.Line generates its own

content. Then, there is the Graphics Department which specializes in creating the graphic images that make Arabia.On.Line stand out as a professionally-designed service. Additionally, Arabia.On.Line's client benefit from the artistic services of the Graphics Department.

Arabia.On.Line's Technical Department is responsible for handling all the technical aspects involved in World Wide Web programming, utilizing HTML, Java and CGI. These services are provided in

that is expected of a pioneering company like Arabia.On.Line," added Mr. Tabaza.

On top of that, Arabia.On.Line's new structure is utilized to best serve the needs of clients seeking expertise in the setting up and development of World Wide Web sites. This, in its own right, is a whole line of business for Arabia.On.Line which already offers its Web-design expertise to leading international and regional companies and organizations.

"Today, everybody is going to the Web. Companies, small and large, realize the huge potential opportunities that the Internet and World Wide Web can offer," said Mr. Majed Qasem, the Director at Arabia.On.Line.

"We have developed a structure that resembles an assembly-line, offering complete text writing and editing services, graphics creation and advanced programming. We already have the technical know-how to program Java and CGI, which makes us maintain our position as the pioneers," added Mr. Qasem. Compared to other companies in the region, that offer Web services as a side business, Arabia.On.Line

is dedicated to Internet development and Web-aided promotion projects.

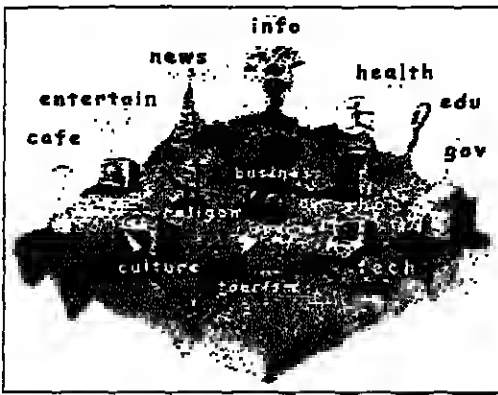
"At Arabia.On.Line, there is no priority over a Web design project. It is our core business to offer complete Web solutions.

Thanks to the new structure, it can safely be said that we can provide the best and fastest customer service in the region," said Mr. Qasem.

"One of the most important things for companies on the Web is exposure. Clients hosted at Arabia.On.Line receive unparalleled exposure, by reaching the huge audience that our service enjoys."

Also, with the new look of Arabia.On.Line, there are special categories that make it easier for visitors to get to the information they are seeking. In other words, we'll not only get you to your target audience, but we will offer you the largest possible number of your audience."

As to AROL's vision and plans for the future, Mr. Qasem said that, "AROL views its position as a new medium available on another medium, the Internet. We hope that, one day, people will turn to us first for their news and information, pretty much like they turn to their favorite newspaper or TV station for news first."



Global Internet in Jordan, only from Global One

GLOBAL ONE / Sprint Jordan, the sole Internet Service provider (ISP) in Jordan, introduced the full Internet on-line service in the country starting March 1996.

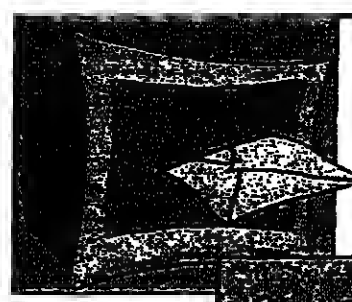
Since then, GLOBAL ONE / Sprint Jordan has attracted over 1,600 subscribers.

"We are pleased to have achieved our goals so far, as expected," said Mr. Majdi Shaweeh, Marketing Manager at Global One / Sprint Jordan. "We aim to hit the 2,000 subscribers mark by the end of the year and, from the looks of it, we could exceed that target."

Stating some of the factors that have contributed to the impressive increase in the number of Jordanian users gaining access to the Internet, Mr. Majdi said that the obvious benefits and attractions of the Internet are guaranteeing this growth.

"Innovative services that Global One / Sprint Jordan provide are also driving factors behind increased subscribers, such as the Faxaway service, which provides secure Internet faxing (email to fax), under the slogan 'Fax More, Pay Less'."

"Faxaway doubled our sales,



as local businesses quickly adopted the choice to achieve huge savings on their communication bill, by replacing faxing with email," said Mr. Shaweeh.

"At this stage, it is important for us to further educate the public on the difference between our Internet on-line service and bulletin board services," said Mr. Shaweeh. "There seem to be some misconceptions, which we are trying to set straight. We are doing so by emphasizing the 'immediate' nature of information access we offer, unlike bulletin board ser-

vices. Also, Global One / Sprint Jordan offers complete Internet services such as World Wide Web access, secure and instant email, access to international conferences and chatting, and more."

Commenting on the Internet service rates in Jordan, Mr. Shaweeh said that

Global One / Sprint Jordan prices reflect the actual costs of delivering the ser-

vice. Still, compared to neighboring countries, they are among the best rates.

"It is important to remember that Global One / Sprint Jordan also offers the best service in the area, in terms of reliability, utilizing fault tolerant systems to guarantee a secure connection for our clients," said Mr. Shaweeh.

As part of Global One / Sprint Jordan preparations for METS '96, the company is seeking to provide a 64 Kbit per second circuit, to serve show participants. If its efforts meet with success, METS '96 will have the same circuit capacity offered in leading international shows such as GITEX '96 in Dubai.

"The Telecommunications Corp. is very cooperative and it is working with us to make METS '96 a truly exceptional event. It is a huge technical challenge. We hope to be able to provide this high-capacity circuit for METS '96," said Mr. Shaweeh.

To discover the wonders of Internet, check out the Global One / Sprint Jordan booth at METS '96, it should prove to be a cyber-experience that you will not forget."

ARAMEX serves technology companies, with top technology

ARAMEX INTERNATIONAL Courier has long served the information technology sector in Jordan with its express and cargo services, and has maintained its sponsorship of the Middle East Technology Show (METS) over the years.

METS represents an opportunity for ARAMEX to strengthen its ties with Jordanian information technology companies and it is also an opportunity to display the latest technologies that ARAMEX applies within its organization to guarantee timely client service.

"One of the recent developments is the ARAMEX Shipment Tracking Service through the Internet. It provides customers with the ability to check out the status of

their shipments, from the comfort of their offices, or homes.

All the customer has to do is access the ARAMEX site on the World Wide Web and enter the airway bill number required. Within thirty seconds, the customer will receive information on the shipments' status. It is an immediate service, that ensures continuous ability to track shipments, at any time.

The introduction of this service stems from ARAMEX's understanding of the urgency with which customers conduct business. "As an international service organization, we are moving with technological development," said Mr. Bassem Malhas of ARAMEX International Courier.

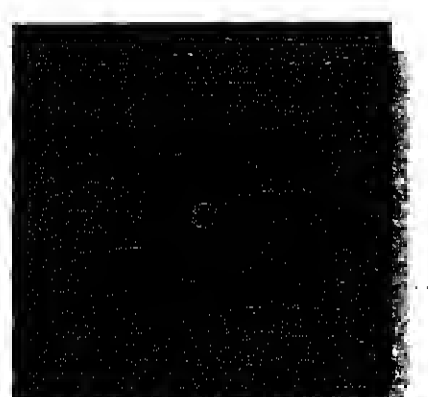
"ARAMEX is a communication-focused company that utilizes several on-line services

to guarantee optimal service," added Mr. Malhas.

Internally, ARAMEX utilizes an on-line connection to Sita which facilitates email communications among ARAMEX staff and affiliated offices all over the world.

"From our new headquarters, we will be better able to implement technology to provide advanced solutions to our clients," said Mr. Malhas.

ARAMEX has recently been awarded the ISO 9002 certificate of quality, affirming the company's commitment towards continued ad-



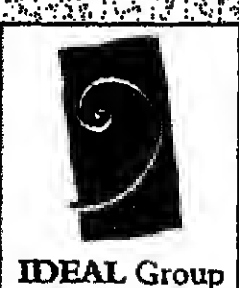
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IDEAL GROUP, one of the country's largest and best-known information technology companies, will make their presence felt with full force at METS '96.

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الكتاب

Phenomenal growth in the number of users on-line: The rise of Jordan's on-line community

THE ON-line scene in Jordan has witnessed explosive growth in 1996, with thousands of Jordanian users going on-line, one way or another, either by signing up with a bulletin board service (BBS) or acquiring an Internet account.

In late 1995, the Jordanian computer-using public was very enthusiastic about the "electronic" future, and was awaiting full Internet access with extreme anticipation.

In the meantime, BBS providers National Equipment & Technical Services (NETS) and Access On-Line somewhat filled the gap by introducing the public to on-line interaction, and providing the very important function of email correspondence.

Into early 1996, and up until March, these BBS's were the only windows on the outside world.

They witnessed massive growth in terms of subscriber numbers, even into the following phase when Internet access did become available.

Today, there are roughly over 3,500 users on-line in Jordan. This figure is the approximate sum of separate figures

announced, each by a different on-line service provider.

NETS claims over 1,500 users and says that there is a very high growth rate by the week. This would put NETS in the lead, as far as BBS's in Jordan are concerned. Access On-Line is said to have over 600 users.

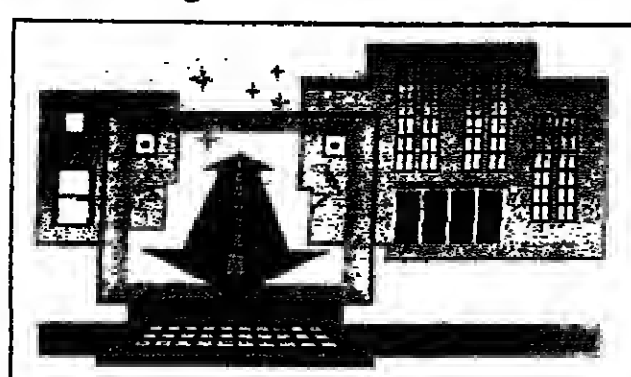
Adding to that, the very impressive figure of around 1,600 subscriber to Global One/Sprint Jordan, as you get the total figure quoted earlier.

What is particularly interesting, when weighing the figures, is that many people in the market never expected response to on-line services to be this wide.

The reason, as told by several market veterans, was that there is a low penetration of personal computers in Jordan, to begin with.

Add to that the fact that a user is required to purchase a modem to get on-line, and you can understand why some people were sceptic about the potential on-line population in the country.

However, time has proven them wrong. As it seems, in spite of low levels of computerization in Jordan, there is a



large potential market for on-line services.

It is large enough to encourage the entry of new parties, such as Computer Networking Services (CNS), who are very confident that they will generate over a thousand subscribers in the coming months.

It is important to point out here that BBS's charge fees which only resemble a fraction of what a user would have to pay to hook up to the Internet proper, through Global One / Sprint Jordan. Even though, there is a fast-growing subscriber base at Global One / Sprint Jordan.

It seems that this enthusiasm is shared by other investors.

Already, seven companies are applying for Internet Service Provider Licenses. From the looks of it, the Internet and on-line services market in Jordan are set to grow at this stage. Saturation is expected in the future, but that will not happen soon. In the meantime, users can rest assured that more services, whether Internet on-line or BBS's, are on the way.

This should further contribute to the status of Jordan which we are all proud of, as one of the most on-line active countries in the region.

METS '96 Seminar Schedule

AS PART of the Middle East Technology Show (METS) '96, a number of seminars will be held through the days of the show.

These are presented by specialists in varied fields of interest in information technology. All seminars will be held at the Amman International Expo. Hall in Marj Al Hamam. (The same venue as the show).

Following is the seminar schedule for METS '96:

Tuesday 12 November, 1996

10 am - 11:30 am: Sybase RDBMS. Presented by Firas Al Uqdeh of Tansh Information Systems Group (TISG).

12 pm - 1:30 pm: A seminar on Acer products. Presented by the Sales Department at Tansh Information Systems Group (TISG).

4 pm - 5:30 pm: PC & Motorola Product Power. Presented by Ihab Al Sahli of Computer & Engineering Bureau (CEB).

6 pm - 7:30 pm: Authorware. Presented by Ideal Systems Co.

8 pm - 9:30 pm: A Seminar on Global One / Sprint Jordan services. Presented by Global

One / Sprint Jordan.

Wednesday 13 November, 1996

10 am - 11:30 am: New Horizons in Arabic Word processing. Presented by Mr Hatem Zeine of Zeine Technological Applications.

12 pm - 1:30 pm: Alcatel Cabling System. Presented by the Computer & Engineering Bureau (CEB).

4 pm - 5:30 pm: The future of technology in the Middle East. Presented by Engineer Taher Al Youssef and Engineer Ahmad Ayyad.

6 pm - 7:30 pm: A seminar on Business Solution. Presented by IdealSoft.

8 pm - 9:30 pm: A seminar on Web Authoring. Presented by Ideal Systems Co.

Thursday 14 November, 1996

10 am - 11:30 am: Intranet Solutions. Presented by Samer Bazian of Business Optimization Consultants (BOC).

12 pm - 1:30 pm: Fiber or Copper. Presented by Engineer Hisham Qattan of Hisham Qattan Establishment.

4 pm - 5:30 pm: A seminar on Arabia On-Line. Presented by Khalid Tabaza of Arabia On-Line.

6 pm - 7:30 pm: A seminar on ABC uninterrupted power supply. Presented by Mr Philip Hues on behalf of Smart Systems.

8 pm - 9:30 pm: Internet for Banks. Presented by Osama Unqud and Samih Toukan of Business Optimization Consultants (BOC).

Friday 15 November, 1996

4 pm - 5:30 pm: Document & Image Management Systems. Presented by Raed Hmoud of Tansh Information Systems Group (TISG).

6 pm - 7:30 pm: Data Image Processing (DIP) for Windows. Presented by Ideal Systems Co.

8 pm - 9:30 pm: A Seminar on Global One / Sprint Jordan services. Presented by Global One / Sprint Jordan.

Abu Ghazalleh Intellectual Property (AGIP) adopts NETS 'Solution for Corporate Accounts'

ABU GHAZALLEH Intellectual property (AGIP)—a member of Talal Abu Ghazalleh International TAGI—has concluded an agreement with the National Equipment and Technical Services (NETS) to set up NETS' Corporate Account solution for Internet wide email, email to fax and groupware effectiveness.

"The Corporate Accounts Solution is the most cost effective way for corporations to provide all of their network users with an email account in addition to establishing a very efficient groupware solution for streamlined communications and file access," explained Mr Jawad Abbassi, NETS corporate accounts manager.

Mr Louay Abu Ghazalleh, AGIP's general manager, said that AGIP's step in connecting its head quarters with the Internet for effective communication stems from its continued

and diligent drive towards incorporating new technology, to provide top notch service on the regional level. Mr Abu Ghazalleh added that the solution shall give more than 100 users in TAGI's Amman head quarters Internet wide email and email to fax with seamless integration to the existing state of the art network utilizing Oracle servers and TCP/IP network protocol. He also stated his company's decision to incorporate the same solution in TAGI's regional offices.

Mr Marwan Juma, NETS general manager, said that the agreement crowns NETS' efforts since its inception more than two years ago, to provide the Jordanian market and companies with reliable and effective communication solutions on the Internet where its customer base has grown to over 1600 users.

Mr Juma said that AGIP's decision follows decisions to utilize NETS Corporate Accounts Solution by many institutions including the American Embassy, the British

Council, Jordan Phosphates Mines Co., Hikma Pharmaceuticals, Special Systems Company, International Traders, Amin Kassar and Sons, Communications Development Group and Ideal Systems Company.

Mr Jawad Abbassi explained that the solution requires a regular PC to run the Server software and can accommodate all network protocols such as IPX, TCP/IP and AppleTalk. The solution can be seamlessly integrated with networks running Novell Netware servers, UNIX Servers or Apple Share servers.

The server can work on either Windows NT or Macintosh based machines, while the Client version runs over all versions of windows, DOS and Macintosh operating systems. On the cost savings entailed,

Mr Doughan Turk (sales and marketing executive at NETS corporate accounts division) said that in addition to having tremendous savings in email and email to fax, users of NETS Corporate Solution eliminate the need for hefty individual subscription rates as the users of the Corporate Solution will get monthly rates for their email addresses of as low as two dinars per month.

The solution further eliminates the need for a modem for every user, as all the users will be simultaneously served by a single server with one modem installed on it.

Mr Doughan Turk concluded by referring to the NETS seminar on its Corporate Account Solution, that will be held during METS '96. For more information, contact NETS at telephone 619870.

Registering local Internet domains: Cyber citizens of 'virtual Jordan'

By Jawad Abbassi
Special to The Star

THE INTERNET is transcending borders and a somewhat international cyber-community is evolving as a result. Still, even Internet on-line people can be distinguished by the cultural and nationalistic differences of their "un-Interneted" counterparts.

While the Internet allows people from all over the world to be connected, through email and Internet telephony, and to share knowledge and experience, through newsgroups and web pages, it nevertheless underlines the national origin of most of its users addresses.

The Top Level Domains (TLD) of most Internet addresses usually stands for the country in which the user resides, therefore a user in Jordan would most probably have an email address with the "jo" part at the end, one in Egypt would have the "eg", Norway "no" and so on.

Hence, it is usually very simple to guess where a certain web site or an email address is located by just looking at its TLD. Of course, this could be very misleading for one main reason: The server or web page with domain name belonging to the TLD of say "jo" need not be in Jordan at all; for all it matters, this address could be served by an Internet service provider in Japan or Germany. What this signifies, though, is that this specific address has been issued and validated by the administrator of this Top level domain (TLD) which has allowed that particular Internet server or rather its Domain Name server (DNS) to serve this particular address.

In the case of the "jo" domain, the body acting as its administrator is the National Information Center (NIC) of Jordan which was established in 1993 "to develop common standards necessary for the management of the National Information System". Incidentally the publicly owned and run NIC was the first in Jordan to establish a local Internet node, catering for the governmental organizations and universities. The NIC's Director of Information Services, Ms Ghazwa Malhas, explained that the NIC is in charge of the following TLDs pertaining to the "jo" domain:

• ".com.jo" for companies, ".edu.jo" for educational institution, ".org.jo" for non-government organizations, ".gov.jo" for government organizations and ".net.jo" for networks. Ms Malhas further elaborated that any organization or company can register a domain name (for a mail or a web server) under any of the preceding TLDs provided the following conditions are met:

- Direct and continuous connectivity should be available with Internet, through any local or international service providers.

- An active office in Jordan is a basic requirement for foreign companies.

- Official documents of domain names and trademarks are required as reference, to guarantee right registration under the right domain.

- Duplication of names is not allowed. NIC will not attempt to provide a direct solution for preventing or resolving the domain name or trademark conflicts.

- NIC will register the names on the basis "first come first served". All requests will be processed in a non-discriminatory fashion and users will be treated on an equal basis.

- Domain names should be selected in accordance with international technical standards: e.g. Valid characters (A-Z), (0-9).

- Selected domain names should comply with public ethics.

- Registration does not require registration fees.

- All sub-domains shall be allowed to operate their own domain name servers, providing correct and true information in them.

The setting up of a procedure for registering domain names under the "jo" TLD and through a national body will surely allow for increasing the number of users "belonging" to Jordan. While the "un-Interneted" people's national and cultural identities are supported by passports, flags and national anthems, the Internet's peoples' identities revolve around two latter "Top Level Domains". Meanwhile, cultural and nationalistic differences endure and keep the world the diverse and exciting place it is.

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Prill
THE BEST AMONG EQUALS

Primus is a Bulletin Board System BBS that provides an easily operated graphical interface, resembling that of the Internet's World Wide Web (WWW). This interface is a mixture of text and pictures in pages which are linked together to give an enjoyable on-line experience.

What is a Bulletin Board System? A Bulletin Board System/Service, generally termed as BBS, is a computerized server system that people can access using modems on their personal computers. Generally speaking, a BBS is a communion for people wanting to share ideas on various issues in the form of discussion groups (public forum areas or conferences).

However, other services are also provided in a BBS. These services could include areas for transferring files (file libraries), private messaging (local or international email), information databases, or maybe, even a special area for advertising. No matter what type of services provided, a BBS constitutes a small community of people interacting with each other.

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METS'96
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NETS

National Equipment & Technical Services
P. O. Box 811912 Amman 11181 Jordan
Tel. 619870 Fax 619871 Email: info@nets.com.jo

Who's who in Jordan's telecommunications policy: TRC promotes cooperation, for growth

By Jawad Abbassi
Special to The Star

JORDAN'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS sector is mediocre at best.

This conclusion needs not be the result of an intensive facts finding mission under a specialized and highly technical committee, it is rather the conclusion of anyone trying to get a phone line and having to wait for periods of up to three or more years. The fact is further underlined by the rather high prices of international leased line connections—an imperative in the Internet era—which are among the highest in the world.

However, with the new Telecommunications Law #13 of 1995, there are positive signs of an impending change of times which will hopefully do away with Jordan's poor telecommunications record to date. A new entrant on the telecommunications stage, established by the new law, will be leading Jordan's march out of its current stall. This new entrant is the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC), which "aims to achieve an effective working relationship between

the state, consumers, service providers and equipment suppliers so as to facilitate the growth of cost effective and reliable telecommunications

Internet service providers and X.25 & X.400 services. Mr. Abu Jamouse further explained that the TRC represents Jordan in the Geneva based Interna-

be facilitated to all interested parties. On this note, Mr. Abu Jamouse pointed out that the TRC has licensed seven Internet Service Providers to date which should translate into more efficient services and reduced costs for the consumers once the seven start providing the services.

The same applies to other aspects of the telecommunications sector where the TRC's General Director pointed out that the immediate plans include having at least two licensees in every single telecommunications service, from cellular to paging.

For instance, the publicly owned TCC will be licensed by TRC at the beginning of 1997. Furthermore, FastLink's—Jordan's cellular phone service provider—concession period will end by the end of 1997 which means that other service providers will be able to enter the market by then. To regard to the Internet Service Providers, TRC's policy is to allow many qualified companies to operate in the market—as is evident by licensing seven companies to

date, which should result in a healthy competition and better cost effective services for the users in Jordan who are still paying high amounts for using the Internet (7 USD per hour as opposed to less than 0.5 USD per hour in Cyprus for instance, a country with a comparable market size).

Of course, the high cost of international leased lines in Jordan are a contributing factor to the high connection rates, but this cost, as it seems, will also be revised.

The presence of the TRC and its drive towards a non monopolistic telecommunications market as a necessary prerequisite to improved service and reliability, gives us in Jordan the hope that telephone lines and proper telecommunications will not be as dear in the near future as they are today.

Obtaining more phone lines for our office email networks, or our kids browsing at home will not be the hectic matter that it has been for long.

A big "welcome" is due here to the new hope for "telecommunicating" Jordanians; the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission. ■



services in Jordan.

Mr. Yousef Abu Jamouse, TRC's Director General, explained that the TRC's tasks include regulating all aspects of telecommunications in Jordan as well as licensing all public telecommunications networks providing services in Jordan. These telecommunications networks include cellular phones, paging services, public phones,

tional Telecommunications Union—a UN body—particularly in the allocation of Radio spectrum use.

The TRC is a firm believer in the benefits of competition in improving the telecommunications services in the country; the telecommunications law makes it clear that applying to obtain licenses to run telecommunications networks should

showing their complete lines of AST computers and Apple Macintosh products. As far as software is concerned, STS will display its range of Microsoft products, for which it is the authorized distributor, focusing on the newly announced and much-anticipated Arabic Windows 95 and Arabic Office 95.

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METS '96 Company News

Netscape Navigator for show 'browsers'

● Business Optimization Consultants (BOC) participate in METS for the second year running, introducing the most popular Internet browser software, Netscape Navigator, for which BOC was appointed this year as authorized dealer in Jordan and Palestine. In addition, BOC will be showcasing its varied Internet-related services including Web development, the company's impressive 'X-Roads' information site on the World Wide Web and electronic directories such as Law On-Line and the Business Directory.

TISG presents Acer Aspire

● Tansh Information Systems Group (TISG), distributors of Acer computers in Jordan, will be revealing the sleek, black-colored 'Acer Aspire' personal computer at METS '96. The Aspire is a stylish PC,

that performs even better than it looks. TISG are offering Aspire systems with complete multimedia (8 times speed CD-ROM & sound card), along with fax/modem. A special feature is the Aspire's 'Voice Interaction' function that allows users to command the computer to open, save or close files—for example—without touching the keyboard. For more information on the Acer Aspire, contact TISG at telephone 689252 or visit their booth at METS '96.

STS gears up for METS

● Specialized Technical Services (STS), a leading supplier of computer products in Jordan, has many new products in store for visitors at METS '96. First, there's the Samsung Sync Master, an award-winning monitor for 1995. Then there's the range of Sun Microsystems Netra Servers and the new range of Sun Ultra Enterprise 3000 workstations. On the PC level, STS will be

showing their complete lines of AST computers and Apple Macintosh products. As far as software is concerned, STS will display its range of Microsoft products, for which it is the authorized distributor, focusing on the newly announced and much-anticipated Arabic Windows 95 and Arabic Office 95.

Ra'ed Arabi pushes forth at METS '96

● In keeping with its tradition to be one of the main exhibitors at METS every year, Ra'ed Arabi will present its full range of products including leading brands like Leo Computer systems, ASK Data Show products, Genius accessories and Triumph Adler printers. The company's Leo PC is one of the top selling brands in the country.

This year, Ra'ed Arabi will also present its comprehensive software solutions in fields of accounting, industry, school management, hotel management and medical systems.

The Jordan Computer Society, organizers of METS

METS is organized every year by the Jordan Computer Society (JCS), a non-governmental organization made of information technology professionals.

The Jordan Computer Society's aims are as follows:

- To enhance the level of the computer profession in Jordan.
- To raise the professional and technical level of people working in the computer field, to strengthen the ties among them, and to defend their interests.
- To highlight the importance of information in modern life, and the role of computers in solving current problems, and to spread computer awareness through seminars, courses, periodicals, exhibitions, and to encourage publishing, Arabizing, research and development in the field.
- To participate in the planning and development of computer education and training

programs and their methods.

● To classify and define different professions and specialties in the computer field.

● To cooperate with concerned local, Arab and international organizations in order to establish and coordinate standards and specifications in the field.

● To attract national expertise in the computer field and direct it towards local needs.

● To form special interest subcommittees in the various computer areas.

● To contact similar Arab and international societies for the exchange of publications, visits, and attendance of conferences and seminars.

● To promote contacts between members of the society and official public organizations, in the interests of the profession.

● To work towards upgrading the social, economic and financial status of members. ■



Officially starting service at METS '96: Primus BBS begins full service

COMPUTER NETWORKING Services (CNS) officially announces the launch of its bulletin board system, Primus, at METS '96.

"We are entering the market to serve Jordanian users, by offering a new and unique level of on-line services, based on more ease of use and more power. Primus will provide something for everyone, and will meet the maturing needs of the Jordanian on-line community," said Mr. Nidal Nasereddin, executive manager of CNS.

What makes Primus stand out, most at first glance, is its attractive user-interface.

CNS adopted Wildcat!, as the BBS software upon which to build Primus. It is a powerful software, which takes Jordanian users into the next stage of BBS's, as it is based on HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language), the most popular programming language used for the World Wide Web.

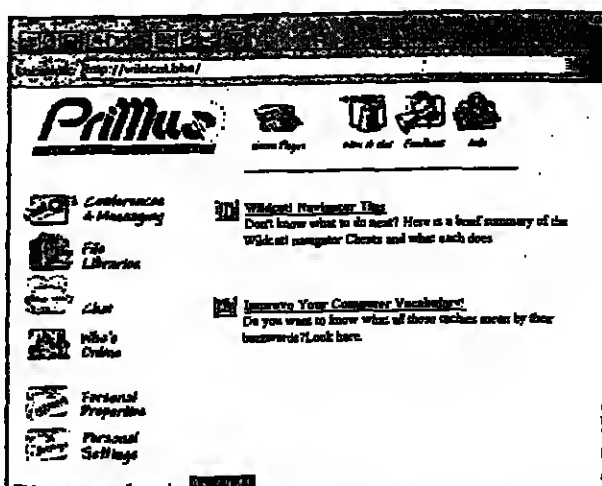
This provides Primus with so many advantages, the simplest of which is the familiarity of the BBS to a typical web site, as users will navigate the service, the benefit from web-line links inside. In fact, every part of Primus BBS has an address line, similar to HTTP addresses, to provide the Internet feel.

Already, CNS is taking advantage of its web expertise to provide web site design services to clients. Primus BBS also offers a variety of services, apart from the traditional BBS functions that the Jordanian public would come to expect, such as E-mail and information services.

Among the special services are 'File Libraries' that include useful programs that can be downloaded by users. CNS is focusing on this attractive service, as the company understands the important role that a BBS plays as a Shareware or Public Domain software source. CNS has built a massive library of over 1 million megabytes of such software, which any Primus subscriber can download free of charge. For example, there are many Windows 95 and Windows NT components found on Primus, in addition to complete applications like Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.01.

Primus also offers the very important, and immensely popular service of conferences in which users can discuss and debate matters pertaining to art, culture, daily life, music, philosophy, business and more.

Among the innovative conferences on offer are 'Technical Support' conferences in which



specialists in their fields will answer the questions posted by users. This on-line support system, catering to general computing and information technology topics, is a pioneering initiative.

Advertising and promotion is another service that Primus BBS offers, thanks to its graphical abilities.

Already, leading local companies and organizations are utilizing Primus as a promotional outlet.

Primus is guaranteeing that all these services are provided to users at an affordable price. Subscribers to Primus are required to pay a JD 25 initiation fee, and a JD 10 monthly fee (of course, as is the case with other BBS services in Jordan, these fees do not cover in-

ternational E-mail).

For what subscribers are getting, the subscription rate seems to be reasonable.

What's more, if users take advantage of the METS '96 offer, they will save themselves JD 25, as they will not have to pay the normal initiation fee.

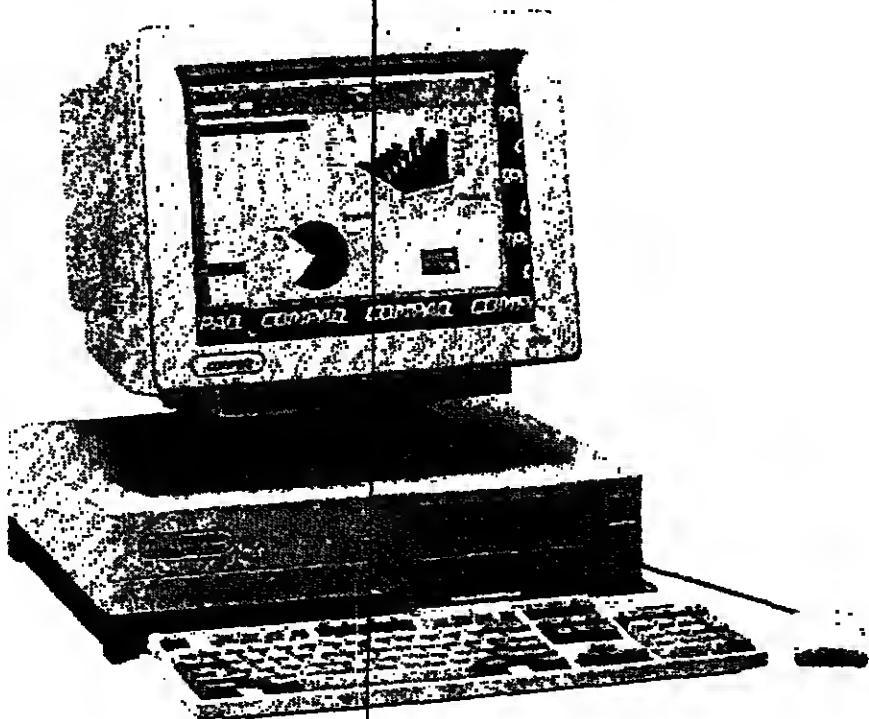
"Primus is here and it will make a difference, by delivering higher levels of service, customer support, satisfaction, and superior quality, with focus on the customer needs", said Mr. Amer Nasereddin, marketing manager at CNS.

"We want to give users the service they deserve and the taste of a truly powerful and functional BBS, enjoyed by users world wide, and hopefully, with time, make them a part of the world wide on-line community", added Mr. Omar Qawas, software manager at CNS.

For more information on Primus BBS, contact Mr. Amer Nasereddin at CNS on telephone 614755, or dial-in directly to the BBS on 611191 via modem. ■



Compaq the #1 selling PC in the world!



Compaq has achieved the highest selling rate for personal computers in 1995. The highest quality standards of its manufacturing and the high performance of its systems contributed to its success in the USA and all around the world. Compaq has become the #1 choice for PC users.

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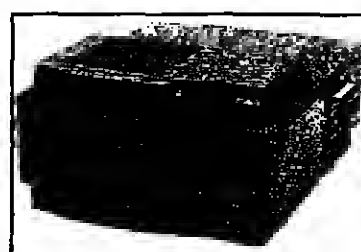
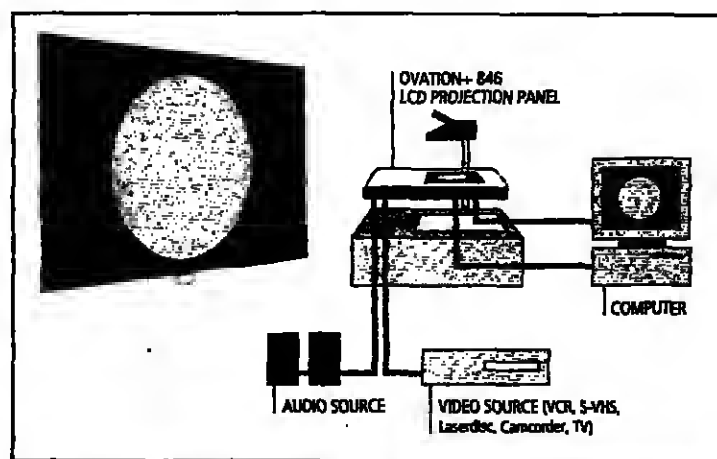
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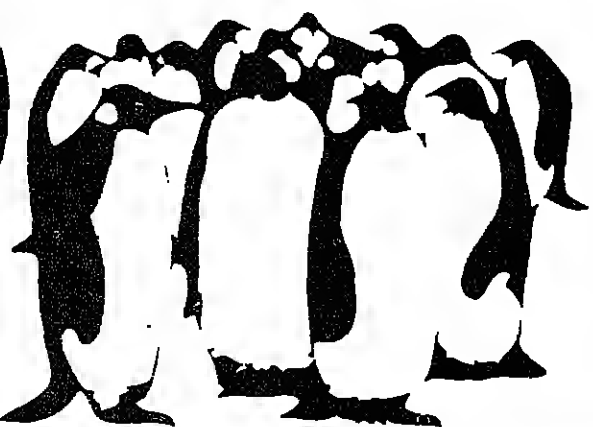
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FOUND TOWN



Photographing everyday life

● Portraying everyday life in the streets and parks of Paris is the theme of Basma Asfour's photography exhibition, currently on display at the French Cultural Center.

Titled *Doubles Regards*, the exhibition comprises photos that express certain moments Asfour experienced through her wanderings in France. The exhibition continues till 28 November.



Al Aydi crafts center

Breathing life into heritage

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

Deft hands recreate heritage. The modern artistic styles keep borrowing from the old. The ingenious designers and craftsmen of Al Aydi craft center combined their efforts to present the traditional designs of Jordan's most prestigious handicrafts in a modern perspective. Under the patronage of HM Queen Noor, an exhibition of hand-made home furnishings and accessories was opened at Al Aydi last 28 October. Titled *Timeless Weavings and New Creations*, the exhibition displays a variety of handicrafts made especially for those obsessed with recreating the traditional.

Diversity is the theme of the exhibition. The exhibited works include, in addition to the main weavings, different accessories and furnishings found in the modern Jordanian house. On display are embroideries, decorative items, straw and woodwork, jewelry, brass, copper and many other artifacts. In this sense, the center provides many things under one roof, sparing people the time to look elsewhere.

"The first thing that comes to one's mind about a handicraft center is rugs and carpets. We are trying to go beyond this concept to a more diverse one," says Mary Khouri, the Director.

The weaving motif is conveyed all through the exhibition. Thin and naturally-dyed threads

give a sense of color congruity. Such a simple color technique inspires a feeling of serenity.

The motif of weaving features all the exhibited works. It is used either as the main structure like in rugs and carpets, jackets, vests, curtains, partitions or as decorative on such things as albums, mirrors and many others.

The title of the center Al Aydi (hands) is meant to reflect the individuals potential to produce with their own hands something that modern weaving machines cannot. "Al Aydi means the blessed hands of our craftsmen who create the handicrafts," Khouri adds.

Al Aydi can also be seen as an information center about old handicraft designs. Not only do the designers of the center continually seek out old designs but also keep up with modern needs. "We cooperate with about 50 Jordanian craftsmen whose creative hands turn our designs into handicrafts," Khouri says. The designs, she adds, are taken from the different parts of Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Added to the weavings is jewelry making. They take the shape of rare plants found in the desert and meadows of Jordan. Colored blown-glass and pottery complete the picture in the exhibition.

A tent placed in the heart of the center is symbolic of how bedouins used to live. We are taken into another world. Bedouins used the fleece of their cattle, weave rugs and carpets to furnish their tents.

Another interesting handicraft that used to be a part of villagers' houses in Jordan is the wedding box.

Then, newly married couples were given an oblong-shaped box decorated with vivid wedding colors to serve as a closet.

Khouri said that the center tries to market the work of individuals not supported by institutions. In Jordan, there are a number of well-trained craftsmen whose works lack marketing.

She adds "we do not choose those people haphazardly but according to a quality control policy." This is in addition to feasibility studies to ensure that the type of handicrafts the center produce is desirable. "This makes our job harder because we try to keep up with the latest designs and have customer-made products."

The center was established in 1979 by a group

of women who wanted to revive the heritage of Jordan. Among those are Sharifa Hind Bint Nasser, Laurie Hass, Widad Kavar and many others. Those women held enlightening ideas about the ways to preserve and reproduce heritage. The Jordanian artist Samia Al Zaru has also contributed to the success of the center having designed the logo of the center which is now a household design. ■

Dubai running on Omega time

AMMAN (Star)—The Middle East launch of the new Constellation watch, OMEGA's star collection, called for a spectacular event. The presence of the brand's star ambassador, Cindy Crawford, in Dubai on Monday 14 October, 1996 did indeed make it a day to remember!

After Milan, Tokyo and Shanghai, Dubai was the scene of Cindy's unveiling of the new models of the Constellation range, especially the fine jewelry pieces and examples of artistic watch making. A particularly good choice of location in the heart of the region, Dubai's flourishing economy, its harmonious mix of traditional Arab culture and western lifestyles, and the area's tourist attractions make it the Middle Eastern "show-case" of luxury products.

The event involving all of OMEGA's agents from the region began with a photo session in the enchanting setting of the futuristic Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club. At the 9th hole, Cindy took a putting lesson from golf pro Dominique Boulet. At 11 am in the lounges of the InterContinental Plaza Hotel, Cindy was the guest of some 100 wives of local dignitaries—an opportunity to exchange ideas, with the charming Miss Lebanon 1996, Dina Azzar, fielding the

questions.

A crowd of more than 100 journalists from the press, seven TV networks (including three broadcasting by satellite) and one radio network attended the press conference, followed by a lunch in the InterContinental Plaza Hotel. The early

guest of Mr Abdul Hamid Seddigi, OMEGA's "ambassador" in Dubai. Her presence at the store brought such mobs of people that a riot almost broke out and the autograph session had to be cut short.

In the evening, Mr Jean-Claude Biver, OMEGA vice-president and member of the management of SMFI, the world's largest watch group, and Mr Seddigi held a gala dinner in honour of Crawford and guests of the brand. A dinner for stars, up close to the stars: ideally situated on the 20th floor of the InterContinental Plaza Hotel, the sumptuous dining room offers a magnificent sky view of Dubai's bay and skyscrapers.

Among the 350 dinner guests was Sheikh Ahmed Al Maktoum, member of the royal family, president of the Dubai Civil Aviation and of Emirates Airlines. Later in the evening, Crawford was flown home by OMEGA's partner Swissair.

Cindy perfectly exemplifies today's active young woman whose beauty is a reflection of her vibrant personality. First a top fashion model, she has begun a successful career in films and business. Her partnership with OMEGA goes beyond simply promoting the brand. She has selected the final design for a new Constellation watch that will carry her name, to be launched on the markets in 1997. ■

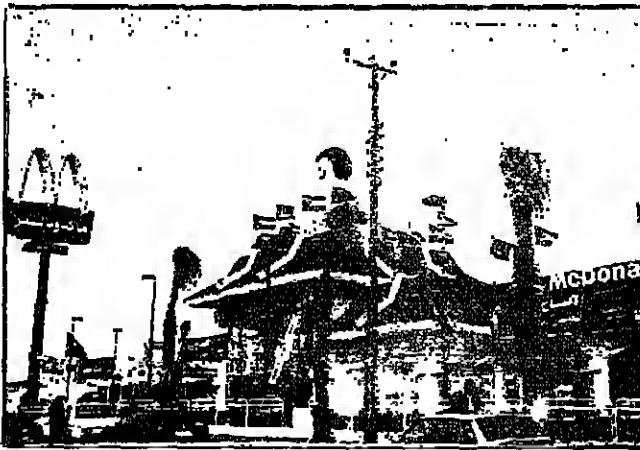


The ambassador of Omega's star collection

afternoon was reserved for a selection of interviews with Cindy about her role as ambassador for an important watch brand.

The high point of the day was undoubtedly Cindy's visit to the "City Centre" as

McDonald's opens in Amman, today



AMMAN (Star)—Today, Thursday 7 November, McDonald's Jordan opens its doors for customers in Mecca street, said Mr Ali Armouh, its general manager. Speaking at a press conference, Mr Armouh said that McDonald's is committed to success in any community it operates in. Attending the conference was Mr Roger Lexel, vice-President of McDonald's International.

Mr Armouh briefed the audience on the quality of service the restaurant offers around the world. He added that McDonald's Jordan will run according to the standards set by McDonald's International. In addition to offering good quality food, the restaurant serves as a training center for Jordanians on good management. "Part of McDonald's job is to export well-trained Jordanians in this field to the Middle East," Armouh added.

Mr Lexel said that the secret behind the success of McDonald's all around the world is the dedication of all its partners to quality and quick service. The Jordanian team, he added, did a great job for the past 12 months in preparation for the opening.

McDonald's has a long chain around the world. "Jordan became the 97th country in the world to host a McDonald's restaurant," Mr Lexel said. He added that McDonald's International will build two more restaurants in Sweifich and Al Wihdar. Asked if the Jordanian market can absorb three McDonald's restaurants, Mr Lexel explained that customers will decide if the project is feasible to proceed with or not. "Customer satisfaction drives any decision the restaurant will adopt in the future." ■

New issue of Amman magazine on newsstands

AMMAN (Star)—The 24th issue of the Arabic cultural magazine *Amman* is available now on selected newsstands. Issued by the Municipality of Greater Amman, the magazine theme this month is on city of Amman as a setting and its impact on the people.

The issue consists of a variety of articles, features, critiques and poems. A critique on the function of poetry according to ancient Arab critics is presented by Ghassan Abd Al Khaleq. On theater, Hasab Allah Yahya wrote a book review on *The Director in The Jordanian Theater* by Mukhlid Al Zayoudi. "The Employment of the Setting in the Narrative Technique" is the title of a critique written by Abdallah Rudwan. Delving into the secrets of Aqaba sea is the focus of an article by Izzidin Manasrah. He writes, with a poetic sense, a lengthy text about a personal experience in Aqaba. The feature story of this issue highlights different cultural aspects of the Comoros islands.

The magazine cites the different cultural activities that happened last month. With Amman embracing a large number of art galleries, the number of exhibitions held is growing. Kifah Al Habib writes a critique about two exhibitions which took place in Baladna Art Gallery while Ali Abd Al Amir points to the relation between the musical activities and the places they were held in. ■

SCRAPBOOK

By Manal Omar

The great homecoming

IT IS not uncommon for many Arab-Americans to dream of what is usually called the great homecoming. In many ways, I was one of those who was fooled by the myth of the much-dreamed-of return. The idealist picture painted through the stories of my parents was greatly distorted with reality as soon as I arrived.

Never having lived in an Arab country, I had been overwhelmed with excitement at living in Jordan, a place to finally plant my roots in native soil. However, after two months, my roots remain unwatered—as the only prospective place to bury them remain a cemented sidewalk. I walk aimlessly through the streets of Amman, searching for long lost clues to the great stories my father had once shared with me about what he called *orouba*.

Instead, I'm greeted by a city filled with people too frustrated with life to bother to say hi to their neighbors. I'm ushered to work by a taxi driver, swerving in and out of cars with little concern for life. I find myself trapped in elevators filled with bodies consumed with problems that a brief smile was the farthest idea from their mind. In an attempt to escape I go to a coffee house, where groups of girls and guys speak a language other than their own in a weak attempt to imitate. Signs of western influences are scattered throughout the streets, suffocating my quest to find my own heritage.

At first glance I appear to blend easily, but my tongue betrays me, for as soon as I speak it is clear that I am new in Amman. The crisp American accent has proved to be a greater tool than any diploma or experience I gained in America.

The reality of this was made painstakingly clear on a number of occasions. Over the phone the treatment and service I would receive as I struggled with my Arabic or surrendered to speaking English was phenomenal. In some cases I would make appointments, only to be greeted by a look of astonishment when the person linked the voice on the phone to the *mulhajiba* (covered) girl who walked through the door. Most incidents resulted in a pleasant ice breaker, many voicing the questions of surprise reflected in the expressions on their face. The questions were at first readily welcomed, but soon the naivety in my eagerness to answer began to wear off as I realized the disappointment in some eyes. The person who had been so friendly on the phone would do a 180 degree turn, as the image conjured in the mind that had been associated with the accent did not match the reality.

No, the picture of the great homecoming is but a figment of the imagination. There is no ideal world to return to, just as there was no ideal America to flee to. The first couple of months in Amman left a bitter taste of disappointment. The great homecoming did not entail a grand parade waiting for me at the airport. It was about being part of the cycle which enveloped the people.

Now I walk down the streets with newfound view. I pray my people continue to grow, but will not confuse modernity for imitation; technology can never replace tradition. The magic of Amman has begun to cast its spell on me, and the people have begun to develop a place in my heart. Now when I enter an elevator, I make it a point to offer a brief, yet kind smile at the weary face in front of me. ■

THE FAR SIDE

BY GARY LARSON



"Now just hold your horses, everyone... Let's let it run for a minute or so and see if it gets any colder."

AGENDA

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Exhibitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Works by Nabeel Shihadeh, at Darat al Funun, continues till 13 November. ■ Another Land, by Muhammad Nasrallah, at Darat al Funun, continues till 13 November. ■ Timeless Weaving and New Creations, running at the Jordan Crafts Development Center (Al Aydi). ■ Hand and Hammer, at Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, opens today Thursday. ■ Doublet Regards by Basma Asfour, at the French Cultural Center. | <p>Films</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Les Granges Brulees at the French Cultural Center, 11 November at 8:30 pm. ■ Super Ted, at the British Council, 12 November at 5:00 pm. ■ Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, at the British Council, 7 November at 5:00 pm. |
| <p>■ University Fair by AMI-DEAST at the Marriott Hotel, Al Waha Ballroom, November 16 from 5-8 pm. Organized by Linden Educational Services.</p> | |

PHAS trademark hits market

AMMAN (Star)—During a press conference last Thursday, the Qweider Trade Est. introduced on the local market the prestigious collection of the famous French PHAS trademark. The conference was attended by Mr Ali and Ziyad Qweider representatives of the Qweider Co., Miss Suad Murad of the Shalhoub Company in Dubai and Christian Ponsot, the French commercial attaché in Amman.

For those women who seek ultimate beauty, PHAS night creams are available more than 27 countries. The trademark, established in 1955 in Paris, offered to the

world of cosmetics its innovative detoxifying creams made by Francois Dall of L'Oreal.

Noctophase is one of the many compounds of the PHAS Trademark. It protects the skin from pollution, high temperatures, and daily stress. If not treated, the skin regeneration is disturbed which cause an acceleration in skin aging. Women using Noctophase cream at night will wake up with a supple, luminous complexion and serene features.

The detoxifying and regenerating Noctophase cream was designed specially for night use. This is because the skin is the most active part of the body during nighttime. Its peak of activity is around 1 am in the morning, the moment when the skin can benefit from available energy to accomplish its mission.

Three main factors lie behind the success of Noctophase. For relaxation and comfort, Noctophase contains a



bisabolol with soothing properties. This ingredient together with Noctophase's pleasant texture and the massage method of application, combine to relax features, tone facial muscles and soothe the skin to instantly restore a feeling of comfort and well-being. Noctophase strengthens the skin's natural resistance system to free radical intoxication. It provides the skin with a dynamic detoxifying system that contributes to reinforcing the skin's natural defences. Freed from toxic substances the skin can regenerate itself much better.

Noctophase's night mission ends with a stimulating action on the skin's cellular renewal process which is enhanced by the presence of a restructuring complex. This is made from a combination of hydroxyproline, a corn extract, rich in nitrogenous substances, sugars, B group vitamins and trace elements that provide a real cocktail of energetic elements capable of boosting the cellular metabolism. ■



Public legend and private man on Orbit

THIS FALL brings a documentary which takes a detailed, pragmatic look at the life and work of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the man who transformed America's ideas about the Presidency, reshaped the role of government, and defined the terms of American political discourse. The American Experience, FDR premieres on Orbit News, the Orbit Satellite Television and Radio Network's 24-hour news and documentary channel. Today, Thursday 7 November, at 8:00 pm GMT.

This four-part documentary examines with a new scholarship the elusive public and private personalities of Roosevelt, following the remarkable trajectory that propelled him into the White House and through the turbulent Depression and Second World War years of his presidency. The programme reveals the

loneliness of the polio-stricken President whose relationship with one other than his wife, was a source of comfort and his instinctive 'partnership' on a professional level with the first ever First Lady of the United States, Eleanor Roosevelt, an imperative support to his public role.

The documentary makes compelling viewing by unveiling FDR as a man who touched people at a very basic level, many would argue that his success spanned 14 years but that very reason. With the use of archival film, home movies, and audio recordings, the story of America's thirty-second President is informative, touching. It explains much of the enigma that has surrounded this person. Orbit News will be showing this four-part documentary every Thursday through November.



Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (tel: 634149): Mission Impossible
- Philadelphia II (tel: 634149): Sabrina
- Plaza (tel: 699238): Independence Day
- Concord I (tel: 677420): Independence Day
- Concord II (tel: 677420): Disclosure



Programs on JTV from 9-15 November

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
2:00—Holy Koran
2:05—Adventures of Mickey and Donald
2:30—Bold and Beautiful
2:45—Just The Job
3:00—French Program
4:00—Gillette (sports)
4:30—Chris Cross
5:00—News Flash
5:02—Futures (Educational)
5:15—Blue Healers
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Something Wilder
8:01—New Literacy (Doc)
8:30—Prism
9:10—Lois and Clarke
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Best Seller
12:00—Classic Movie

MONDAY

2:00—Holy Koran
2:05—Muppet Show
2:30—Bold and Beautiful
3:00—French Program
4:00—Nature's Inventions
4:30—Hey Dad
5:00—News Flash
5:02—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Rosanne
8:01—Disaster Chronicle (Doc)
8:30—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
9:10—The Lazarus Mao
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Return to Lonesome Dove
11:15—Bodies of Evidence
12:00—Dad's Army

TUESDAY

2:00—Holy Koran
2:05—Buddle (Cartoon)
2:30—Adventures on The Rainbow Parade
2:30—I Love Lucy
3:00—French Program
4:00—At The Zoo
4:30—Alf
5:00—News Flash
5:02—Fun with Physics
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Murphy Brown
8:01—Magazine Zero-One
8:30—Encounter

WEDNESDAY

2:00—Holy Koran
2:05—Muppet Show
2:30—Bold and Beautiful
3:00—French Programs
4:00—Earth Revealed
4:30—Blizzard Island
5:00—News Flash
5:02—The Adventurers
5:30—Kelly
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—The Four Seasons
8:01—Super Stars of Action
8:30—Challenges
9:10—NBA
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Bugs (Drama)
11:15—Hurt To Hurt
12:00—Who Is The Boss

THURSDAY

2:00—Holy Koran
2:05—Iris
2:15—Orid and the Gang

FRIDAY

2:00—Holy Koran
2:05—Iris
2:15—Muppet Show
2:30—Playabout
3:00—See How They Grow
3:15—French Programs
4:10—Crystal Maze
5:00—News Flash
5:02—Name Your Adventure
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Documentary
8:01—Secret Weapons
8:30—Hunter
9:10—VR.5, The Virtual Reality (Science Fiction)

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China Beach, Tuesday at 10:30 pm

9:10—Star Trek
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—China Beach
11:15—Mission Impossible
12:00—Are You Being Served

WEDNESDAY

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PROGRAMMES EN FRANCAIS SAMEDI

3:00—Documentaire
La France aux 1000 villages
3:30—Emission jeunesse
Fête des hébes
6:00—Série
Jack
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Ziva

DIMANCHE

3:00—Emission jeunesse
Cajou
3:30—Divertissement
Week-ends spéciaux
6:00—Magazine
Faut pas rêver
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Sports et musique

LUNDI

3:00—Variétés
L'intégrale
3:30—Documentaire
Séraphine Eicher
6:00—Magazine
Cassiope
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Cinq sur cinq

MARDI

3:00—Dessins animés
3:15—Magazine
Montagne
Hauts de surveillance
6:00—Série
La lumière des justes
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Extra large

MERCREDI

3:00—Jeux
Pyramide
3:30—Série
Les six compagnons de l'aventure
6:00—Magazine
Ushuaia
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Sports et musique

JEUDI

3:00—Variétés
Emission spéciale à l'occasion de l'anniversaire du roi Hussein
5:30—Divertissement
Le monde est à vous
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Atomes crochus
9:00—Le Journal

VENDREDI

3:00—Emission jeunesse
L'école des fans
5:30—Magazine
Envoyé spécial
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Allo la terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

Celebs...



● The American actor Gene Wilder stars in a new play titled *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*. It opened in Shaftsbury avenue.

Video releases

"THE CRAFT" (Columbia/TriStar, R): It's definitely the witching hour in this supernatural comedy, as several young sorceresses — played by Fairuza Balk, Robin Tunney, Rachel True and "Party of Five's" Neve Campbell — combine their powers to assume ultimate control of their school and its student body. Ultimately, their plan goes awry ... allowing the special-effects masters to do their thing. ** (R: AS, P, V)

"DON'T BE A MENACE TO SOUTH CENTRAL WHILE DRINKING YOUR JUICE IN THE HOOD" (Miramax, R): As the title should imply, this parody is a spoof of many urban dramas that have been released in recent years. Shawn and Marion Wayans — currently starring in the aptly named WB Network series "The Wayans Bros." — co-wrote and star in the picture, which satirizes numerous elements of the other films. ** (R: AS, P, V)

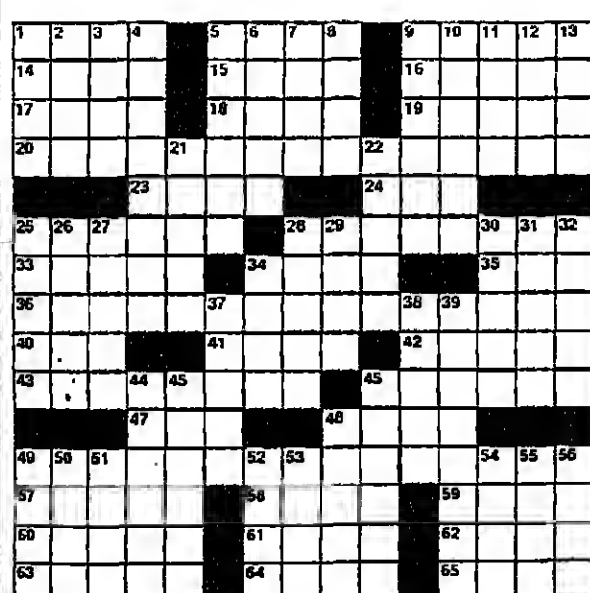
COMING SOON: "ERASER" (Warner, Oct. 29): Arnold Schwarzenegger stars as a federal marshal aiding people in the Witness Protection Program, including Vanessa Williams. (R)

"HEAVEN'S PRISONERS" (New Line, Oct. 29): Alec Baldwin plays an ex-cop swept into a drug-dealing childhood friend's (Eric Roberts) actions; Teri Hatcher also stars. (R)

"MOLL FLANDERS" (MGM/UA, Oct. 29): Robby Wright stars as novelist Daniel Defoe's spirited heroine; Morgan Freeman and Stockard Channing also appear. (PG-13)

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1 Jungfrau's site
5 Headliner
8 Scott's
14 Stripped
15 Balking's slant
16 Humiliate
17 Bare's river
18 Arlen or Paton
19 Microscopic organism
20 Chaotic
21 Hilarious event
22 Irritation
23 Vigilant
24 Baldardash
25 Bluecaneer
26 Cut into
28 Customary practice
34 Horse
35 Mena
36 Arams

DOWN
1 Med sch.
2 Jacob's wife
3 Henri's wife
4 Post line
5 very hungry
6 Dutch flower
7 end (over)
8 Pealed
9 Motor truck
10 Termites
11 Judge's seat
12 Jacob's brother
13 Cincinnati
14 Lander of cosmetics
20 Perforation
21 Hostess machine
22 Golf shoes
23 — an arrow...
27 More nearly
28 — With Love
29 Pious
30 Resin
31 Espi de —
32 Demi —
33 As in (usually)
37 Liquid measure
38 Larch and locust
39 Winter cap
40 features
41 Aish chetars
42 Concave
43 Customer
44 Goddess of agriculture
45 Skit device
46 Perforation
47 Isador, once
48 Rispac
49 esago
50 (elegant)
51 Border on
52 Pleasant
53 Recreant

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—THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: With the sun still in Libra, philosophical conversations could reach the upper esoteric.

Aries (March 21-April 19). Pay off a debt, just in case you have to burrow again. Study a foreign language and you may qualify to go abroad.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). If you could use a hand, do the research. You'll find lots of valuable information. An older person has all kinds of activities for you to do. Be helpful.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). You're lucky. Concentrate on a tough job. Discuss your work with a lighthearted friend. The two of you can come up with new approaches to the problem.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). True love beckons. Be in the right place at the right time. Concentrate on your work. A deceptively simple subject will take longer than you thought.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Make a big decision about your living environment and stop worrying about it. A startling development in your love life leads to new excitement.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're lucky in love, especially in an educational setting. Your attention will be drawn to a mess that needs cleaning up at home.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You can buy what you need if you sell something you don't need first. A neighbor can help you understand a difficult subject.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Use your secret powers to get what you want. A private conversation reveals insider information. Be stingy with your money.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You may be feeling a little guilty. That's just your conscience trying to remind you to complete something you've started.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A secret pact with a friend gives you needed support. You're busy checking things off your list.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're lucky, but you could have problems with a stubborn supervisor. Don't fight a battle you can't win.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll learn a lot if you don't let an outspoken person hurt your feelings. True love puts in an appearance.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: Take care of your resources and they'll grow to where they can take care of you. Friends are the key to your success this year.

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Bridge

Render Unto Caesar
By Omar Sharif and Tannah Hirsch

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ Q J 6 4
♥ Q 6
♦ J 10 8 6
♣ A Q J

WEST
♠ K 8
♥ J 10 9 5 2
♦ K Q 3
♣ 10 6 4

EAST
♠ 7 5
♥ K 8 7 3
♦ 7 5 2
♣ 9 5 3 2

SOUTH
♠ A 10 9 3 2
♥ A 4
♦ A 9 4
♣ K 8 7

The bidding:
South West North East
1♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
4♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠
South's play to the first trick on this hand was quite correct in terms of the heart suit alone. It was completely wrong if the hand is considered as a whole.

North's jump raise to three spades with 13 points in high cards wouldn't raise an eyebrow among those who play this sequence as forcing. Since queens and jacks are overvalued in the 4-3-2-1 scale, limit raises should be equally content — the hand is not worth its face value. Regardless,

South has ample to carry on to game, but too many losers to look for more.

West led the jack of hearts, covered by the queen and king and taken by the ace. Dummy was entered with the ace of clubs and the queen of spades was run to West's king. West found the superb defensive play of returning a low heart, which proved to be the only way to defeat the contract. East won the trick with the seven and shifted to a diamond. Declarer played low, West won with the queen and got out with a trump. Eventually declarer lost a trick to the king of diamonds for down one.

Before playing to the first trick, declarer should have worked out that the contract was secure if the losers could be limited to one in each suit except clubs. To accomplish that, East had to be kept off lead.

Correct technique is for declarer to play low from dummy to the first trick, then allow the jack of hearts to win. Now declarer can win the heart continuation, cross to the table with a club and try the trump finesse. If loses, but declarer can win any continuation, draw trumps, then clear clubs, ending in dummy. Now the jack of diamonds is run. West can win, but is trapped in an endplay. A diamond return is into declarer's tenace, and any other suit allows declarer to ruff in dummy while discarding the remaining diamond loser from hand.

Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

M E R G I

O R V A S

S U F O A M

S T O L C Y

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by

Answer here: O O O O O O O O

— GRASS ROOTS
Answer: GRIME SAVON BASKET WEAVING SKILLS CAME FROM.

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Words of Wisdom

Working for the good of others will ensure your own good.

The evils that never occur often cost us the most pain.

A lie will soon run itself to death unless you try to chase it.

There is no peace in satisfying every desire.

Flattery cannot harm one who knows himself.

Spending money on yourself eventually becomes a burden; spending money on others will free you.

Be careful not to let your own prejudices and desires obscure your sight.

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TRUE!

By Daryl Cagle



Source: Isaac Asimov's Book of Facts, 1979, Grosset and Dunlap

Pioneering birth control advocate Margaret Sanger came from a family with 11 children.

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Yasser Arafat veut régler Hébron au Caire

Le président palestinien Yasser Arafat a confirmé dimanche que des efforts étaient en cours pour organiser une cérémonie de signature d'un accord israélo-palestinien sur Hébron (notre photo), lors de la conférence économique pour le Proche-Orient prévue du 12 au 14 novembre au Caire. «Il y a des efforts égyptiens à ce sujet», a déclaré M. Arafat cette semaine sans donner plus de précisions. Il a ajouté que les négociations pour le transfert des pouvoirs à Hébron à l'Autorité nationale palestinienne se poursuivaient et restaient confrontées à des obstacles substantiels. Mardi, les deux parties se refusaient mutuellement la responsabilité du blocage des discussions sur le redéploiement militaire israélien et déclaraient d'attendre le retour du négociateur américain Dennis Ross pour reprendre ces discussions. Le ministre israélien de la Défense Yitzhak Mordechai a estimé que «le nouvel accord aurait pu être signé depuis longtemps, mais Yasser Arafat, sans qu'aucune décision ne peut être prise, retarde les choses». Le chef de la délégation palestinienne Saïb Erakat a lui envoyé une lettre à son homologue israélien pour lui demander de reprendre les négociations sur Hébron, estimant «qu'il n'y a pas de raison de perdre davantage de temps».



Droits de l'Homme

Une urgence diversement appréciée

Le dernier rapport sur la Jordanie publié par l'Organisation arabe des Droits de l'Homme s'intitulait «urgent». Celui-ci dénonce une situation qui se dégrade dans le domaine des droits de l'Homme depuis le début de l'année. Mais sa publication à la fin du mois dernier a soulevé beaucoup de critiques dans le pays.

Dans son rapport

«urgent» publié voilà deux semaines, l'Organisation arabe des droits de l'Homme a mis en cause le gouvernement de M. Kabari, l'accusant d'avoir enregistré le plus mauvais bilan dans le domaine des droits de l'Homme depuis le début du processus de démocratisation en 1989. Lors de sa formation en février, ce gouvernement avait pourtant appelé à une plus grande liberté d'expression et s'était engagé à respecter les droits de tous.

Les violations dénoncées dans ce rapport concernent la liberté d'expression, l'abus législatif, les arrestations arbitraires, la torture physique et mentale. Le ministre de l'Information Marwan Mousasher a officiellement rejeté toutes les allégations portant sur les cas de torture de détenus et les restrictions de libertés publiques évoquées par l'OADH. Il a affirmé que la majeure partie de ce rapport lui paraissait être un discours politique plutôt qu'une étude fondée qui soutienne ses accusations par des preuves. Selon lui, le gouvernement enregistre le meilleur bilan de la région dans le domaine des droits de l'Homme.

Le quotidien Al-Doustour a également critiqué ce rapport. Selon Mohamed Al-Soubheh, «le rapport s'intéresse beaucoup aux émeutes de Kérak. Il a beau se dire «urgent», son contenu porte sur la liberté de publication et de législation se borne à répéter ce qui avait déjà été publié dans les rapports précédents par diverses organisations jordaniennes. Bien que cette organisation se décrive comme une organisation non-gouvernementale, beaucoup de phrases et d'expressions laissent sentir la présence d'arrière-pensées politiques. Il prétend que le gouvernement actuel est moins coopératif que ceux qui l'ont précédé. Il n'a pourtant jamais interdit aux membres de l'OADH de visiter les prisons, de rencontrer les prisonniers

ou de leur parler. Cela laisse penser que le rapport est malhonnête et peu convaincant. De plus, il ne donne ni noms, ni preuves de ses accusations.»

«Le rôle de l'OADH consiste à rassembler les plaintes des citoyens, à les envoyer aux responsables et aux organisations des droits de l'Homme, à rendre visite aux prisonniers et à publier ses rapports dans la presse nationale et internationale», explique Hani Dahle, un des responsables de la cellule jordanienne de l'OADH. Elle n'a pas légalement le droit de mener sa propre enquête sur une affaire. Elle s'adresse directement au gouvernement pour qu'il apporte une réponse aux plaintes qui lui sont adressées. «Mais le gouvernement refuse de nous répondre dans la plupart des cas», regrette Hani Dahle. «Le rapport «urgent» était appuyé par des preuves et des noms. Certains journaux l'ont publié intégralement, comme Al Majd, Al Ahliah et Al-Bilad, tandis que d'autres, dont les deux plus grands quotidiens jordanien, n'ont publié que quelques extraits, en omettant de citer des noms et des preuves. C'est ce qui permet aux officiels, dont le discours s'inspire de ces deux journaux, de nous attaquer. Il suffit de regarder le Jordan Times pour retrouver les noms des détenus, les dates et les lieux de leur détention.» Avec une diffusion bien plus restreinte que les quotidiens arabophones, le Jordan Times, titre détenu en majorité par l'Etat, est beaucoup lu par la communauté étrangère du pays mais moins par la population jordanienne.

«L'intérêt du citoyen. L'organisation est là pour défendre les citoyens dont les droits ont été violés», déclare Hani Dahle. «Elle n'a pas pour objectif d'évoquer les progrès observés en Jordanie dans le domaine des droits de l'Homme, comme le souhaitent certains. Elle doit souligner les dysfonctionnements

qui existent dans ce domaine», explique Hani Dahle.

Selon lui, le gouvernement continue de rejeter ce type de rapports, pas seulement ceux de l'OADH, mais aussi ceux d'organisations nationales ou internationales, qui s'intéressent à l'action du gouvernement jordanien.

«En ce qui concerne notre organisation, les autorités jordaniennes violent l'existence de l'OADH comme un symbole de démocratie et de liberté d'expression dans le pays. N'importe quelle mesure prise contre cette organisation fera du tort au gouvernement qui prétend respecter les droits de l'Homme et la vie démocratique», ajoute Hani Dahle.

Les seules réponses obtenues par l'organisation sont jusqu'à présent les propos du ministre de l'Information qui affirme que «le gouvernement applique légalement la loi en ce qui concerne les droits de l'Homme». «Mais le monde entier s'accorde pour définir un prisonnier politique comme une personne emprisonnée pour avoir publiquement exprimé ses idées politiques», souligne Hani Dahle. «Or ce n'était notamment pas le cas du journaliste Abou Rouman qui a été arrêté pour un article qu'il n'a pas publié. Cela prouve que la loi est appliquée d'une façon abusive. Et ce, qui est regrettable, c'est que la presse jordanienne, et en particulier les quotidiens, ne publie pas nos communiqués ou nos rapports, comme si les droits de l'Homme ne la concernaient pas. Pourtant, notre combat pour la défense des droits de l'Homme est le même que celui des médias».

Le souhait d'Hani Dahle est qu'aujourd'hui les autorités jordaniennes et l'Organisation arrivent à coopérer. «Nous avons un but commun: servir l'intérêt du citoyen. Nous appelons donc le gouvernement à appliquer la loi de façon juste et à répondre à nos demandes.»

Moua Qaddoumi

Conférence

Associer la presse francophone de la région

Une dizaine de titres francophones du Proche et du Moyen-Orient ont étudié pendant deux jours au Caire les moyens de s'associer pour réussir à développer la presse francophone dans la région et les filières francophones de formation.

Disséminée dans toute la région, du Proche-Orient aux pays du Golfe, la presse francophone compte actuellement une dizaine de titres. Elle revêt des formes différentes, qu'il s'agisse de pays comme l'Égypte où la francophonie reste très importante, ou bien des Emirats arabes unis où elle essaie d'éclore. Contrairement au Liban et à l'Égypte qui comptent des quotidiens et des hebdomadaires en français uni-

quement, le français doit souvent cohabiter ailleurs avec l'anglais, comme par exemple au sein du Khaleej Times à Dubaï ou du Star ici. Le quotidien libanais Al Nahar est le seul à associer, une fois par semaine, la langue arabe et la langue française.

Pour permettre à tous ces journaux de mieux se connaître, les premières journées de la presse francophone au Proche et Moyen-Orient ont été

organisées fin octobre au Caire conjointement par le ministère français des Affaires étrangères, la mission audiovisuelle régionale d'Amman et l'ambassade de France en Égypte.

Neuf titres francophones étaient représentés: trois du Liban (l'Orient-Le jour, Magazine et Al Nahar), trois d'Égypte (Al Ahram Hebdo, le progrès égyptien et Aujourd'hui l'Égypte), un de Dubaï (Khaleej Times), un des Emirats arabes unis (Emirates news) et un de Jordanie (the Star). Ces journées réunissaient aussi des représentants de deux centres de formation francophone, la faculté de communication du Caire et la faculté de journalisme de Beyrouth.

Le but de ces journées était de générer différentes formes de coopération entre les universités, les journaux, ainsi qu'entre les journaux et les filières de formation. Ainsi les étudiants du Caire pourront peut-être dans l'avenir aller étudier au Liban et ces deux filières pourront s'associer pour réaliser ensemble des journaux-écoles. L'idée de permettre à des étudiants francophones venant d'autres pays de la région de suivre des formations journalistiques a aussi été émise.

Pour rendre ces filières de journalisme plus attractives, les journaux francophones doivent offrir des débouchés. Or ces débouchés dépendent bien entendu du développement de la presse francophone dans la région qui se heurte souvent à la place grandissante de l'anglais.

Pour se renforcer, les titres francophones ont décidé de s'associer. Au niveau rédaction-



Selon le ministre de l'Information Marwan Mousasher, le rapport de l'OADH n'est pas fiable car trop politisé.

S. Sweiss à l'honneur

Souleiman Sweiss a récemment reçu le prix Munther Anabawi pour sa longue lutte pour la défense des droits de l'Homme. Ce prix est décerné chaque année par l'Association des écrivains jordanien. Notamment membre d'Amnesty International et de l'OADH, Souleiman Sweiss milite depuis 17 ans pour dénoncer les violations existant en Jordanie ou dans les pays arabes.

Pour lui, la période actuelle est particulièrement délicate. «L'époque la plus difficile n'était pas celle des années 70 ou 80 quand nous sollicitons la libération des détenus, mais celle qui a commencé depuis 1989.»

Commentant le faible nombre de réponses faites par le gouvernement aux demandes de l'OADH, il estime que «parler des violations des droits de l'Homme dans un pays qui se dit démocratique ne devrait plus rester tabou».

Moua Qaddoumi

Salon

Internet en vedette

Le salon informatique Mets qui débutera lundi à Amman sera largement consacré au réseau informatique Internet.

Le Mets 1996

qui ouvrira ses portes au public lundi accueillera les visiteurs jusqu'au 15 novembre. Ce salon se tiendra dans la grande salle d'exposition de Mar-el-Hamam, à un quart d'heure en voiture du septième cercle. Un service de bus gratuit sera proposé à partir de ce cercle.

Le Middle East Technology Show (METS) est un salon axé sur l'informatique. Pour sa cinquième édition, il consacra cette année une large place au développement du réseau d'Internet en Jordanie.

Mets est organisé par la Jordan Computer society, une association privée de professionnels de l'informatique. Selon cette association, 31 entreprises seront présentes pour ce salon, exposant leur matériel et leur savoir-faire. Une association qui regrette l'absence pour ce salon des plus grandes sociétés informatiques jordaniennes qui sont pourtant des pionnières dans le domaine de l'informatique en Jordanie.

Le salon est soutenu par de nombreux sponsors, dont la société de messagerie Aramex, la revue spécialisée Byte Middle-East, le fournisseur de services Internet Sprint Jordan ou la compagnie de téléphones mobiles Fastlink. Les entreprises Firsty Group communications et Transcomputer communications seront aussi associées à ce salon.

L'exposition sera répartie dans deux grandes salles. Les plus grandes entreprises occu-

peront la première tandis que la deuxième sera réservée aux exposants qui souhaitent vendre directement au public, à des prix particulièrement attractifs durant la durée du Mets.

Le premier anniversaire d'Internet

Pour célébrer le premier anniversaire de l'arrivée d'Internet en Jordanie, tous les exposants de la salle principale bénéficieront d'un accès au réseau Internet.

Outre le dernier cri de la technologie en matière de modèles, kits multimédias, imprimantes, couleurs, disques durs, amovibles ou processeurs pentiums hyper-sophistiqués, Mets présente dans son agenda 1996 une série de conférences qui se tiendront dans l'enceinte même de l'exposition et qui seront ouvertes gratuitement au public. Le programme de ces conférences sera donné sur place.

Le Mets est un salon de niveau professionnel incontestable qui est extrêmement représentatif du niveau informatique que connaît la Jordanie.

En projetant d'inviter des sociétés étrangères à participer dans les prochaines éditions, les organisateurs du Mets d'Amman ont pour objectif de conférer à ce salon un caractère international, ou du moins régional au niveau du Proche-Orient.

Jean-Claude Elias



Economie

Français et Jordaniens parlent affaires

Jordaniens et Français ont étudié la semaine dernière au Centre culturel français les moyens de faciliter les relations économiques entre les entreprises des deux pays.

Dans le cadre de

l'association visant à développer les relations commerciales entre l'Europe et la Jordanie (JEBEA), une réunion s'intéressant aux liens commerciaux entre la Jordanie et la France s'est tenue la semaine dernière au Centre culturel français. Une réunion à laquelle ont participé des hommes d'affaires jordaniens, des membres de l'Ambassade de France et le directeur régional d'Air France.

«Cette réunion a eu lieu après la visite du président Jacques Chirac qui avait pour but de renforcer les relations économiques entre la Jordanie et la France», commente Anwar Obaidat, un des fondateurs de la JEBEA.

Cette association a été créée après la rencontre économique entre des hommes

d'affaires jordaniens et leurs homologues européens pendant la conférence du Caire portant sur le «partenariat entre l'Union Européenne et le Moyen-Orient en décembre 1994», explique Riad al Khouri, lui aussi membre-fondateur. «Cette conférence était une occasion pour les PME (petites et moyennes entreprises) de la région - Égypte, Jordanie, Palestine et Israël - de rencontrer des dirigeants de PME européens».

L'objectif de JEBEA est de faciliter le secteur privé jordanien avec les programmes d'aide provenant de l'Union Européenne, programmes dont peuvent bénéficier les investisseurs jordaniens. Le contact entre les Européens installés en Jordanie et les Jordaniens intéressés peut s'effectuer grâce à ce type de rencontre qui aura régulièrement lieu avec tous les pays membres de l'Union.

Les dossiers des candidats aux projets signés dans le cadre du protocole financier franco-jordanien. Un protocole d'environ 90 millions de francs qui se concentre sur cinq projets, notamment dans le domaine de l'eau et de l'équipement médical.

Afin de faciliter les contacts entre les hommes d'affaires jordaniens et leurs homologues français, le premier conseiller auprès de l'Ambassade de France, M. Gerrit Van Rossum, a souligné les facilités offertes aux hommes d'affaires pour obtenir un visa afin de se rendre en France. Il a aussi mis en valeur l'importance du traité de Schengen «qui facilite le déplacement dans les pays européens». Le directeur régional d'Air France Jean-Jacques Le Dauphin espère lui que dans l'avenir, la compagnie pourra augmenter le nombre de ses vols hebdomadaires entre Amman et Paris.

De meilleurs contacts et une meilleure compréhension passent aussi bien sûr par une meilleure connaissance de la langue française pour de nombreux hommes d'affaires jordaniens. Denis Toupin, directeur du Centre culturel français, a annoncé que des cours spécialisés en français commercial ou économique étaient prévus au CCF.

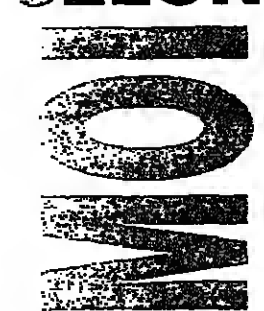
Des initiatives qui devraient permettre de resserrer les relations commerciales franco-jordaniennes. Dans un proche avenir, la JEBEA compte créer à Amman un centre d'affaires pour faciliter les contacts entre Jordaniens et Européens.

Orout el Abed



Hyde Park, supplément hebdomadaire du quotidien libanais Al Nahar, est le dernier né de la presse francophone du Proche Orient.

SELON



Mettre le français et l'anglais sur un même pied d'égalité en Jordanie. Le souhait émis par Jacques Chirac lors de sa visite en Jordanie le mois dernier est une chance offerte aux Jordaniens. Prenant le contre-pied de l'expression bien connue «impossible n'est pas français», la Jordanie a montré jusqu'à présent que le développement de cette langue rencontrait beaucoup de difficultés.

Le projet actuel est donc très ambitieux. Il nécessite d'importantes réformes pour réussir à inscrire dans les esprits et les mentalités cette grande tâche fixée par le président Jacques Chirac et le roi Hussein. Pour les deux dirigeants, cette mesure doit rétablir l'intensité des relations existant entre les deux pays.

Celle-ci pourra ouvrir l'horizon à de nouveaux échanges basés sur plus de communication et un dialogue plus clair.

L'instrument de la langue devrait en effet être non seulement le support d'une meilleure communication, mais aussi celui d'une meilleure compréhension.

Pour accomplir cette généralisation de la langue française dans un pays arabe plutôt anglophone, tâche des plus difficiles, un programme précis prenant en compte les réalités et les besoins jordaniens est nécessaire. Mais quel programme et avec quelle équipe? C'est par petites touches que l'on peut réussir à développer progressivement l'enseignement du français dans ce pays. En imaginant, par exemple, un programme par dix ans. Celui-ci pourrait commencer avec l'augmentation du nombre d'enseignants en utilisant les enseignants formés dans ce pays, dans les deux universités jordaniennes qui enseignent le français ou bien au Centre culturel français.

Ces jeunes francophones doivent bien sûr recevoir une formation spécialisée dès maintenant pour pouvoir plus tard à leur tour enseigner. En augmentant les performances de ces diplômés jordaniens, on pourrait ainsi disposer de nombreux formateurs capables d'enseigner le français aux niveaux primaire et secondaire une fois leur diplôme en poche. Et pour ceux qui souhaitent poursuivre leur cursus, des cours plus spécialisés, par exemple en littérature ou en civilisation, devraient ensuite être inscrits aux programmes des universités.

Pour lancer ce programme de réformes, un débat rassemblant tous les acteurs francophones de ce pays doit avoir lieu. Il permettrait de réfléchir aux objectifs que se fixe la Jordanie en matière d'enseignement du français et aux moyens dont elle dispose.

Quasi sa majesté le roi Hussein a fait son cadeau surprise au président Jacques Chirac, personne n'a vraiment été étonné dans le pays car les affinités entre les deux pays ont des racines profondes.

Avec une solide collaboration, la Jordanie et la France devraient donc aujourd'hui réussir à mener à bien ce grand projet.

Ahmad N'Sour

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Norwegian Embassy	644932/4
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Cairo

A city that never rests

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

CAIRO—"Jokingly, someone told me that Egyptians don't have a rush hour, but a rush day," says Mr. Ray Sexton, an American tourist in Cairo, summarizing the agony with which every Egyptian starts his day trying to get to job with the least damages on the road.

A four-day visit to Cairo must include a tour of its famous streets such as Adli, Fouad and Suleiman Pasha streets, the narrow lanes and old markets of Fatimid Cairo, the once posh neighborhoods of Maadi and Zamalek, the castles, the mosques and of course the pyramids.

These and others are the typ-

ical Cairo landmarks, symbols of a city that has a fair share of history: a city that never sleeps. Streets are packed with vendors offering pedestrians the deal of the day. The Nile echoes the sighs of couples sitting on concrete benches alongside the famous corniche.

Traffic jams are part of Cairo's ongoing drama. A budding author will find ample material for a first-class novel by just watching the disorder of traffic flow in Cairo. Packed buses can be seen swerving as they attempt to avoid people crossing randomly and heedlessly. All these scenes and more "make walking to the place one wants to get to faster than taking a bus or a taxi," says Ramzi Fathalla, an Egyptian journalist.

However, a visitor to Cairo believes that life here has a special taste. Aside from the long-rooted history of Cairo, it is a full-fledged city that heads firmly towards the future. No matter how hard times are, Egyptians never look back but always think of the second day.

A long walk through the lanes of the old market of Khan Al Khalili challenges the imagination and inspires tranquility. Though it seems ironic, yet the non-stop hustle and bustle of the old market is another reminder of the people's insistence on enjoying their time against all odds.

The market is a microcosm of Cairo. The artifacts, sculptures, colored glass, wooden



One of the popular areas in Cairo

boxes and other trinkets that Cairo's artists produce testify to the city's artistic originality.

When the market closes, life moves on to the famous coffee houses. Al Fishawi coffee shop is one famous example. Those who finished shopping can take a rest from bargaining at Al Fishawi, located almost in the heart of Khan Al Khalili.

A cloud of smoke from the hubbly bubble of shisha, hovers over customers' heads. It is an escape from life's daily tensions. Cairo at night is as intriguing as by day. Even children who are supposed to be in bed walk its streets at midnight. Accompanied by their parents, children are taught how to enjoy Cairo's innocent night life bonanza.

"We Egyptians do not care about money, we spend a lot on having a good time and we are satisfied with that," says a taxi driver. "I have seven kids all of whom need care," he says giving the reason why I should

pay him 15 Egyptian pounds rather than five which is the meter rate.

A sound and light evening at the pyramids area has a timeless impact. The gigantic pyramids are inundated by laser rays while the voice of the narrator tells the tales of a glorious past.

The gentle autumn breeze makes a trip on a cruise boat in the Nile something of an everlasting pleasure. The night cruise gives one the opportunity to view Cairo from a different angle. A belly dancer becomes the center of attractions to European tourists and some take their first lesson in elementary oriental dancing. This is followed by a dervish dancer who, while winding unceasingly, goes into a trance. Egyptian dervishes hold their own festival every year during religious ceremonies in which they practice their rituals aiming to get united with self and God.

Leaving Cairo is always difficult. It means leaving behind all that euphoria, all that feeling of security, all the friends. But as the old saying goes, "He who drinks from the Nile will return to it." I am sure this is true because Cairo has very much left to offer. ■

Another little Italy crops up in New York

By Mimi Avins
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

NEW YORK—So many major Italian designers have opened new boutiques on upper Madison Avenue in the last month that the always elegant street could be renamed Via Madison.

An 18,000-square-foot Prada store at 70th Street will probably become the Prada for New Yorkers, who'll leave the tiny old 57th Street shop to the tourists k.d. lang, wearing a men's Prada suit, and girlfriend Leisha Haley hopped at the opening party Sunday.

Guests walking north on Madison to Prada passed the first uptown Emporio Armani, an enlarged Valentino boutique, the spacious new four-level French limestone Giorgio Armani store designed by Peter Marino, a new Moschino shop and New York's first Etro outpost. Maybe the world's most beautiful paisley fabric will do better in the East than the West; an Etro boutique in Beverly Hills failed.

Next to a small children's department on the top floor of Moschino is a bathroom so whimsical it's hard to leave. The walls are completely covered in Legos, with baskets of the plastic pieces for those inspired to add on. The mirror is set into a Monopoly board, and toys hang from the chandelier. In contrast, the bathroom at the stark, pale green Prada store is all chrome, stainless steel and mirrors. Armani's rooms for evening wear, shoes, ski clothes, and tailored clothing were all stocked with merchandise, but the bathroom hadn't opened yet.

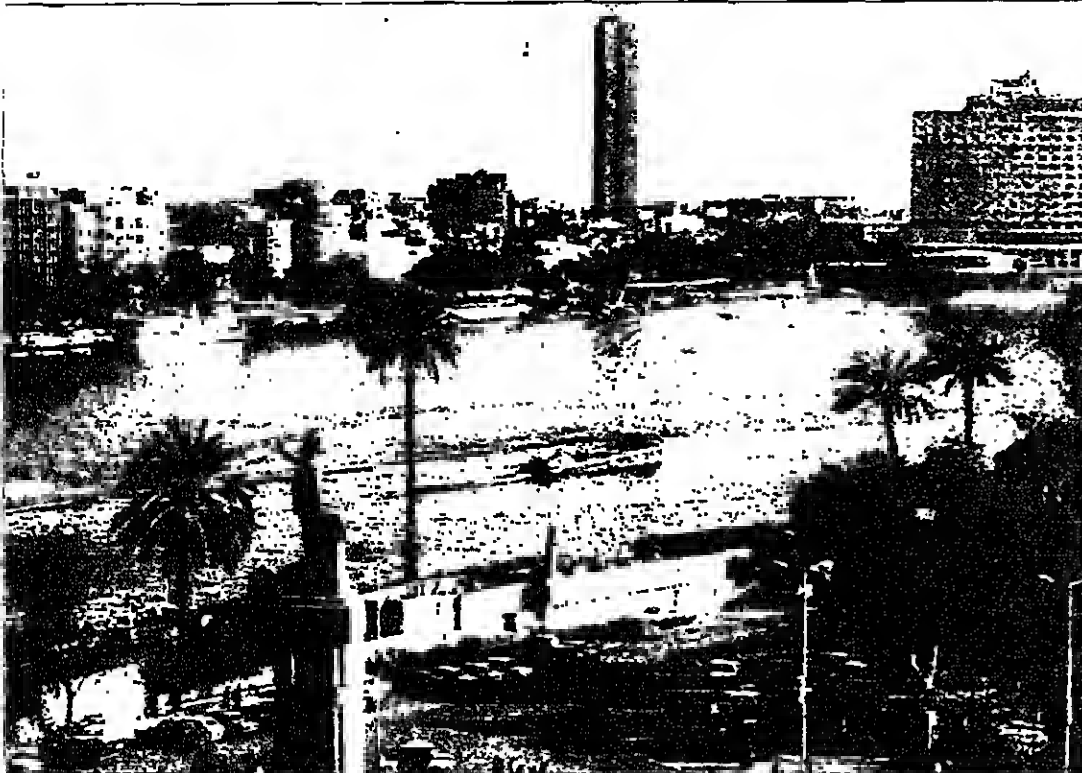
When Worlds Collide: The 1,000 guests celebrating the debut of Gianni Versace's flagship store in a grand, 28,000-square-foot

renovated Vanderbilt townhouse on Fifth Avenue last Saturday night sprawled over the shop's five levels, listening to Versace court rocker Elton John's performance of spirited duets with Jon Bon Jovi, which only those crammed into the second floor could see live. Just before 11:30, a cameraman from CNN burst in and announced, "The Yankees won the World Series!"

The crowd was thick with young men best described as beautiful and European. "Who the Yankees?" they asked. Outside, firecrackers exploded and ebullient natives danced in the streets. Inside "chez" Versace was probably the only place in the rejoicing city where the reaction to the Yankee victory was a big yawn.

Unusual Offerings: Designers and cosmetics manufacturers court the fashion media much like a tentative, old-fashioned suitor would: gifts of flowers and chocolate are delivered to hotel rooms, but anything more elaborate or expensive would be considered overkill. Philosophy, a new beauty company whose wide range of unusual products are available at Nordstrom and Barneys, sent a survival kit targeted to the rigors of Fashion Week in New York. It included Kiss Me, a rich lip balm in a nice, fat pot; Footnotes, a pumice scrub to soothe tired feet; and Wiped Out, a cleanser and moisturizer in one, for those too weary for multistep beauty rituals.

My only gripe with Philosophy is the cutesy verbiage that decorates their containers. Funny they didn't figure out that anyone tired enough to use Wiped Out or Footnotes doesn't have the patience to read a jar of Exit Strategy to determine it's a pimple cream, and would rather not be reminded that "the road to intimacy is lots of kissing" each time she greases up her chapped lips. ■



Cairo overlooking the Nile

To many, Tyson continues to pose serious health risk to Holyfield

By Greg Logan
LATimes-Washington Post News Service

FIVE YEARS ago, the prospect of Evander Holyfield, the lion-hearted warrior, challenging Mike Tyson, the heavy-handed intimidator, for the heavyweight championship of the world would have been the most thrilling fight imaginable. But now, boxing and medical experts are uncertain whether Holyfield is a physical marvel or a medical mystery headed for an unhappy ending. To many in the sport, the danger Tyson poses to Holyfield is absolutely chilling.

The fear of tragedy is such that the Nevada State Athletic Commission required Holyfield to undergo a battery of tests at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., for the second time in two years and took the additional step of sending a physician to Houston on two separate occasions to monitor Holyfield's training. Holyfield received the Mayo Clinic's stamp of approval and impressed the Nevada doctors who examined him, but medical science hasn't yet discovered the way to accurately assess the risks of the sweet science.

Two highly respected doctors affiliated with the Nevada commission and veteran trainer Eddie Futch, who worked the opposing corner in Holyfield's three fights against Riddick Bowe, expressed deep reservations to Newsday about the decision to license Holyfield to fight Tyson.

After Holyfield showed obvious signs of fatigue as early as the second round a year ago against Bowe, and subsequently was knocked out for the first time in his career, Dr. Alben Capanna, a neurosurgeon on the Nevada commission's medical advisory board, wrote a letter to Holyfield recommending that he retire. Capanna has no hard evidence, but he said his gut feeling is that Holyfield may be fighting with congestive heart failure.

"I thought something was wrong, but they couldn't find it," Capanna said. "Stress tests at the Mayo Clinic are not going to stress Evander at all because he's in phenomenal condition. There's no way for the Mayo Clinic to duplicate what happens in a fight. In my opinion, Evander should have cardiac tests, pulmonary tests and chest X-rays right after the Tyson fight, but they don't want to do that."

Capanna's concern dates to April 22, 1994, when Holyfield was in distress during a fight in which he lost the heavyweight title to Michael Moorer and was hospitalized and treated for dehydration. He retired three days later when doctors thought they discovered a hole in his heart.

Tests at the Mayo Clinic in December of 1994 concluded Holyfield's heart was healthy and that his condition had been misdiagnosed because he received excessive fluids combined with medication after the fight.

Capanna joined a 5-0 vote by the medical advisory board recommending to the Nevada commission that it lift Holyfield's suspension. He returned with an impressive 10-round decision over Ray Mercer on May 20, 1995. But Holyfield, blaming a virus that interrupted his training, ran out of gas in his 4 November 1995 fight with Bowe and again appeared fatigued while stopping former cruiserweight champion Bobby Czyz in five rounds in his last fight, 10 May at Madison Square Garden.

As a condition of being licensed to fight Tyson Saturday at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Holyfield agreed to another series of tests at the Mayo Clinic this past summer. Dr. John Scott, who was in charge of Holyfield's care for both exams, sent a letter on 30 Aug to the Nevada commission



that concluded: "Mr. Holyfield is in excellent health, and no cardiac or pulmonary abnormality is demonstrable. Based upon our evaluation, no restrictions should be placed on Mr. Holyfield's activities, including boxing."

This time the commission cleared Holyfield to fight without consulting the medical advisory board. "I voted for him the first time, but I would have voted against him this time," Capanna said. "My vote would not have been based on scientific data. I don't want him to get hurt. In my opinion, there's a high probability he will, but I think he goes into congestive heart failure during a fight. You're not going to measure that with the tests that are done."

The commission vote to license Holyfield was announced as unanimous, but two of the five commission members were absent. One was Dr. Elias Ghanem, a for-

mer commission chairman who was called away by an emergency. When the commission voted 4-1 in favor of licensing Holyfield in 1995 after the fighter's first examination at the Mayo Clinic, Ghanem cast the negative vote.

There is no medical degree hanging on Eddie Futch's office wall, but the 85-year-old trainer knows when he's looking at a fighter who is all but shot. Holyfield 132-3, 23 knockouts) turned 34 last month, and though he has only 35 professional fights, he may have reached that point early because of his go-to-war fighting style.

Tyson's past two opponents, WBC champion Frank Bruno and WBA champion Bruce Seldon, seemed paralyzed by fear and were all too willing to go down quickly. But Holyfield is, as advertised, the "Real Deal." If anything, his legendary courage could get him into trouble. Emanuel Steward was Holyfield's trainer when he won the second Bowe fight by boxing and making effective use of his legs. Holyfield sparred the shockingly low total of 38 rounds in preparation for that bout. Most of his ring work was spent punching hand pads held by Steward.

"That was OK when he was fighting regularly, but with two fights a year, it's different," Steward said. "You can shadow box all you want, but it's different when you get in the ring. Without the body-to-body contact you get in sparring, your body is exhausted after three or four rounds."

Still, Steward is one of the few experts who gives Holyfield a good chance to win simply because he knows Holyfield can be counted on to hit Tyson with real punches for the first time since he got out of prison. Like Steward, trainer Teddy Atlas loves Holyfield's heart, but he has serious questions about how much Holyfield's body has left.

In preparing Moorer for his upset victory more than two years ago, Atlas put together a tape that showed how dramatically Holyfield had aged since 1988, when he moved from cruiserweight to heavyweight. During the fight, Atlas noticed something was wrong physically with Holyfield and told Moorer to attack or five to regret it when Holyfield lost his next fight.

"We've all got an opinion of Holyfield being so special, but when he couldn't handle Czyz more easily, you knew something had diminished him," Atlas said. "You don't judge by chronological age; you judge by tough fights and the amount of punches a fighter has been hit with. Evander is more into his 40s if you judge him that way."

There has been a deterioration in his performance, and anybody who says otherwise is not being honest. Unfortunately, the Tyson fight has come at a late stage in Holyfield's career. Maybe he'll make us all look like idiots on 9 November. I hope so. ■

FIFA set to wrestle with Japan-Korea problem

ZURICH—World soccer's governing body FIFA must confront the pressing problem of persuading joint 2002 World Cup hosts Japan and South Korea to overcome their differences during a series of meetings this week.

The joint organizing of the first finals in Asia will head the agenda, especially in the wake of FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter's comments in a magazine article last month that the co-hosts were moving further apart on their plans.

The meetings at FIFA's headquarters over four days starting on Tuesday will also deal with topics ranging from the outcome of last month's abandoned Estonia-Scotland World Cup qualifier to the status of beach football.

Delegates from Japan and South Korea will meet with the 2002 Study group members Guillermo Canedo of Mexico, Antonio Mararese of Italy and Blatter on Wednesday, in what is sure to be a hard-biting meeting.

"I don't think people in Europe realize just how different Japan and South Korea are," said a spokesman for the World Cup Preparatory Committee for Japan recently.

"Overcoming the cultural, historical and administrative differences is going to be monumentally difficult but until the

meeting on 6 November, we can't even get started."

FIFA decided in May that Japan and South Korea would be the first co-hosts in the event's history but the project has got off to a rocky start.

Japan still feels upset that FIFA compelled them to accept the co-hosting plan less than a week before the final vote was to be taken, while South Korea are now touting for North Korea to be included in the deal.

As the tournament is being shared, it also means each nation's potential revenue is being halved and last month, a Japanese delegation led by the president of the football association, Ken Nagamura, petitioned FIFA to raise the number of matches and to contribute towards the extra costs out of the 1.0 billion dollar sale of television rights.

Meanwhile, with another round of 1998 World Cup qualifiers scheduled for this weekend, the outcome of the Estonia-Scotland match will be decided by delegates on the '98 organizing committee.

It meets on Thursday to decide not only the outcome of the match but also the fate of Estonia, which faces expulsion from the tournament for failing to fulfill their European group four fixture in Tallinn.

Scotland were awarded a provisional 3-0 victory which



followed a dispute about the kick-off time, altered because of Scottish doubts about the quality of floodlighting available at the stadium.

While Estonia failed to appear, Scotland did kick-off the match, even though they were the only team on the field, and the game was then abandoned after three seconds.

Since those farcical scenes were played out, Estonia have appealed to FIFA to have the match re-played.

The same committee will also review the status of Bosnia for the rest of the qualifying tournament. Bosnia played their opening "home" match in group one against Croatia in Bologna, Italy, last month after

FIFA ruled that Sarajewo was too dangerous to stage matches.

But Bosnia are playing Italy in a friendly in Sarajevo this week, the second major international event held there following the Sarajevo Solidarity athletics meeting organized by the International Amateur Athletic Federation meeting in September.

A total of 11 meetings involving nine FIFA committees are being held this week and among the items on a busy agenda are discussions on proposed law changes including larger penalty areas, the introduction of short corner kicks, banning the defensive wall at free-kicks, professional referees and banning the offending team from touching the ball after a free kick has been conceded.

The Task Force 2000 work group, established to examine the future of the game, will discuss the future of the golden goal, the back-pass rule, the question of two referees, changing the throw-in to a kick-in, the goalkeeper's four-step rule and passive offense. No law changes can be implemented without the consent of the law-making body, the International Board which comprises the four British associations and FIFA and which does not hold its annual meeting until next spring.

Another issue on this week's agenda will be the future of perimeter fences at stadiums around the world following the tragedy in Guatemala last month in which 84 people were crushed to death before a World Cup qualifier. ■

Troubled Marseille prays for a win against Monaco

MARSEILLE—Former European soccer champions Marseille are in a deep crisis and trainer Gerard Gili knows that another defeat at home to Monaco on Tuesday would probably cost him his job.

"What might happen to me is not the problem," said Gili. "The most important thing is to find ways of improving the club's situation. One way would be to beat Monaco."

After one draw and four defeats in their last five matches, Marseille are now 15th in the 20-strong league and in danger of returning to the second division.

Marseille, who were relegated over a match-rigging scandal in 1994 and only returned to the top flight this season, have not scored a single goal since 6 October, when they lost 2-1 at Strasbourg.

They were full of hope when the season started after signing German goalkeeper Andreas Koeck, gifted French midfielder

Reynald Pedros and Bulgarian Jordan Lechkov.

But Pedros failed to shine, Lechkov only played well in his first few matches and Koeck was made more busy than he probably wished by a porous defence.

Irish striker Tony Cascarino, who could hardly stop scoring last season in the second division, is often left on the bench and Italian central defender Alberto Malusci proved volatile as he showed again on Saturday when he was sent off in Montpellier, where Marseille lost 2-0.

The Marseille fans, used to better days under the reign of former club boss Bernard Tapie, have become increasingly angry as their team keep sliding down the rankings.

A few pelted police with stones outside the Velodrome ground venting their frustration after a 1-0 defeat to lowly Caen last month. ■